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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
HENRY KIRKE WHITE
AND
JAMES GRAHAME.

With Memoirs, Critical Dissertations, and
Explanatory Notes,

BY THE
REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN.

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CONTENTS.

KIRKE WHITE'S POEMS.

	PAGE		PAGE
THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF HENRY KIRKE WHITE . . .	vii	Music	108
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS—		On being Confined to School one pleasant Morning in Spring	109
Clifton Grove: a Sketch . . .	3	To Contemplation	110
Time: a Poem	18	My own Character	112
Childhood: a Poem	37	Lines written in Wilford Church- yard	114
The Christiad: a Divine Poem .	50	Verises	117
Lines written on a Survey of the Heavens	61	Lines	118
Lines supposed to be Spoken by a Lover at the Grave of his Mistress	68	The Prostitute	120
My Study	65	ODES—	
Lines	69	To my Lyre	122
Written in the Prospect of Death	71	To an Early Primrose	124
Verises	73	Addressed to H. Fuseli, Esq., R.A.	125
Fragment	74	To the Earl of Carlisle, K.G. . .	128
Fragment	75	To Contemplation	130
To a Friend in Distress . . .	76	To the Genius of Romance . . .	135
Christmas Day, 1804	77	To Midnight	136
Nelsoni Mors	79	To Thought	137
Epigram on Robert Bloomfield .	81	Genius	139
Elegy occasioned by the Death of Mr Gill	81	Fragment of an Ode to the Moon .	142
Inscription for a Monument to the Memory of Cowper . . .	82	To the Muse	143
"I'm pleased, and yet I'm sad"	83	To Love	144
Solitude	84	On Whit-Monday	145
Fragments	86	To the Wind, at Midnight . . .	146
Fragment of an Eccentric Drama	91	To the Harvest Moon	147
To a Friend	97	To the Herb Rosemary	149
Lines on Reading the Poems of Warton	98	To the Morning	150
Fragment	99	On Disappointment	153
Commencement of a Poem on Despair	102	On the Death of Dermody the Poet	155
The Eve of Death	104	SONNETS—	
Thanatos	105	To the River Trent	158
Athanatos	106	Supposed to have been Addressed by a Female Lunatic to a Lady .	159
		Supposed to have been Written by the Unhappy Poet Dermody in a Storm	160
		The Winter Traveller	160
		Sonnet by Capel Loft, Esq. . . .	161

	PAGE		PAGE
Recantatory in Reply to the foregoing elegant Admonition	162	BALLADS, SONGS, AND HYMNS—	
On Hearing the Sounds of an Æolian Harp	162	Gondoline: a Ballad	173
Sonnet	163	A Ballad	184
To Capel Loft, Esq.	163	The Lullaby of a Female Con- vict to her Child	185
To the Moon	164	The Savoyard's Return	185
Written at the Grave of a Friend	165	A Pastoral Song	187
To Misfortune	165	Melody	188
Sonnet	166	Song by Waller	188
To April	166	The Wandering Boy: a Song	189
Sonnet	167	Canzonet	190
To a Taper	167	Song	191
To my Mother	168	The Shipwrecked Solitary's Song to the Night	192
Sonnet	168	The Wonderful Juggler: a Song	194
To Consumption	169	Hymn	197
Sonnet	170	A Hymn for Family Worship	198
Sonnet	170	The Star of Bethlehem	199
Sonnet	171	A Hymn	200
Sonnet	171		

GRAHAM'S POEMS.

THE LIFE AND GENIUS OF JAMES GRAHAM	203	The Resurrection	301
THE SABBATH: A POEM	215	Jesus Appears to the Disciples	305
SABBATH WALKS—		Paul Accused before the Tribu- nal of the Arcopagus	305
A Spring Sabbath Walk	243	Paul Accused before the Roman Governor of Judea	306
A Summer Sabbath Walk	244	THE RURAL CALENDAR—	
An Autumn Sabbath Walk	246	January	306
A Winter Sabbath Walk	248	February	308
THE BIRDS OF SCOTLAND	249	March	309
BIBLICAL PICTURES—		April	311
The First Sabbath	295	May	312
The Finding of Moses	297	June	313
Jephtha's Vow	297	July	314
Saul and David	298	August	316
Elijah fed by Ravens	299	September	318
The Birth of Jesus Announced	300	October	319
Behold my Mother and my Brethren	301	November	320
Bartimeus restored to Sight	301	December	321
Little Children brought to Jesus	301	To a Redbreast that flew in at my Window	323
Jesus Calms the Tempest	302	Epitaph on a Blackbird killed by a Hawk	324
Jesus Walks on the Sea, and Calms the Storm	302	To England on the Slave Trade	324
The Dumb Cured	303	The Thanksgiving off Cape Tra- falgar	325
The Death of Jesus	303		

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE is the first YOUNG poet we have yet encountered in the course of this edition, and we may fitly introduce him by a few remarks on poetical precocity and poetical prodigies.

All poets in a sense are for ever young. Genius has a youth involved in it constituting a treasure and a food which the world knoweth not of. What is genius but being intensely *en rapport* with Nature? and Nature is everlastingly young. On the head of the poet, indeed, gray hairs will whiten, and perhaps more speedily than on that of men of less ethereal mould. The frame of the man of genius is often prematurely enfeebled by study or anxiety, and his sun sometimes goes down while it is yet day. But his soul is continually young. His heart never grows old,—nay, often in extreme age he renews his youth. New freshness seems to blow on him from the Hesperian isles as he nears the West; and you apply to him the words of the Divine Lyrist—

“In old age, when others fade,
He fruit still forth shall bring.”

But there is a class of poets, who, dying early—as though a crescent moon should be snatched up by some “insatiate archer” into the infinite, ere it had filled its full sphere—excite in us a peculiar and pensive emotion, and are perhaps dearer both to the heart and the imagination than those minds

which have been permitted to expand into mature and full-orbed splendour. Such were Chatterton, Michael Bruce, Keats, Kirke White, and Herbert Knowles. And such, too, although less prematurely removed, were Robert Pollok, Shelley, Byron, and Schiller; for they, too, had not fully reached middle life, and had not nearly developed the riches of their genius when they were hurried away.

It has often been said that men are apt to exaggerate the powers and achievements of these early poets, and to give them credit in advance for deeds which, had they lived, they might never have performed. And certainly some of those poets who have been prodigies in boyhood, have not afterwards fulfilled the prestige. Probably, too, prematurity of development includes in it a certain exhaustion of the intellectual, as well as of the physical energy; and some of those early victims have perhaps died as the result of having done their utmost and best. "I do not think," says Hazlitt, "that Chatterton would have written better if he had lived. He knew this himself, else he *would* have lived." Yet in such cases as Keats and Shelley, where there is such evidence of steady, cumulative, and gigantic *growth*—ranging in the one from an *Endymion*, up through a *Lamia* and an *Isabella* to the almost *Eschylean* grandeurs of an *Hyperion*—and in the other, from a *Wandering Jew* and a *Zastrozzi*, up through a *Queen Mab*, a *Revolt of Islam*, and a *Prometheus Unbound*, to a *Cenci*—the best tragedy out of Shakspeare in the English language—we are impelled to believe, that had they lived, there was no height in poetry which was not within their reach. Of the subject of this present narrative, we can hardly say so much. Henry Kirke White was indeed growing to the end of his brief life, but growing rather in intellect and in knowledge than in genius, and growing rather by dint of his own indefatigable industry and dauntless purpose, than through the strong, silent propulsion of nature. Nor, as we shall see afterwards, was his genius of the highest order; and thus, even although life and the highest culture had been granted him, it was not in his power to have become a great poet.

Nevertheless, the history of letters contains the names of few

men more amiable, accomplished, and interesting than Henry Kirke White. It is almost sacrilege attempting to write his life, after that simple, touching, and felicitous biography of Southey—a work confirming the truth of the statement, that the best biographer of a poet is a poet. We shall proceed in his wake, simply to jot down the particulars—few and well known—of White's rapid career.

Henry Kirke White was the second son of John and Mary White, and was born in Nottingham, March 21, 1785. Nottingham, by the way, for its size, has been somewhat prolific of genius, as the names of Philip James Bailey, William and Mary Howitt, the ingenious writer who subscribes himself "Quallon," and some others risen or rising, sufficiently prove. White's father was a butcher. His mother, whose maiden name was Neville, was of a respectable Staffordshire family, and so accomplished that she at one period kept a boarding-school to eke out the scanty income of the house. Henry at three years of age was sent to school with a Mrs Garrington, described as a good teacher, a worthy woman, who had the sense to see the uncommon capacity of her pupil, and perhaps said to him, as Dame Oliver said to Samuel Johnson (when, as he was leaving for Oxford, she brought him a piece of gingerbread!)—"You are the best scholar I ever had." From a very early age reading was Henry's ruling passion. His sister remembered him sitting in his little chair with a large book on his knee, while his mother had to say more than once, "Henry, my love, come to dinner," ere she could rouse him from his reverie. When seven, he used to steal into the kitchen to teach the servant to read and write. To her he first shewed a tale about a Swiss emigrant,—his earliest composition, which he was ashamed to submit to any of his own relations.

At six, he had been transferred to the care of the Rev. John Blanchard—then the best teacher in Nottingham—at whose school he learned writing, arithmetic, and French. His proficiency and diligence were extraordinary. One day, when only eleven, he wrote a theme for every boy in his class, to the number of twelve, all good; and his own was thought by the

master super-excellent. At this school he would have profited still more had he continued longer to attend it; but his father insisted on his carrying the butcher's basket one whole day in the week, and all his leisure hours besides; and afterwards, on occasion of a quarrel with Mr Blanchard, withdrew him from the school.

For a short time butcher-meat took the place of books with poor Henry, whom we seem to see plodding from door to door with a very discontented visage. He was soon, however, placed at school with a Mr Shipley, who discerned his talents, and reported accordingly, to the great joy of the mother.

He had not been well used at the former seminary by the ushers and some of his school-fellows; and, like Pope, he took his revenge by writing lampoons on them. This was a species of writing he foreswore afterwards, and only showed these compositions to some of his most intimate friends. His mother, assisted by her elder daughter, now opened a boarding-school; but this speculation, although ultimately successful, did not for some time materially better our poet's prospects.

At fourteen, Henry was sent to the stocking-loom, with the view of being promoted at a future period to a looser's warehouse. He went to this with prodigious reluctance. There is certainly something exceedingly unpoetical in a stocking-loom. The sound of the shuttle in an ordinary weaver's shop is rather spirit-stirring,—it is cheerful, and even musical; but how different the slow, harsh grinding of these everlasting wires!—although, by the way, some of our happiest hours in boyhood were spent in visiting a person who wrought at a stocking-loom establishment; and our memory of it is associated for ever with that of the humorous tales which he—being a “fellow of infinite jest”—told us, and with the first reading of the “Merry Wives of Windsor,” which he lent us at a time when there was scarcely another play of Shakspeare in the village. Henry worked most reluctantly in this ungracious atmosphere for a year, his body, as he hints in one of his poems, being chained to the frame, while his spirit was roaming by the banks of Trent, or plunging into the far American woods. When barely fifteen, his mother had him removed to the somewhat more intel-

lectual drudgery of a lawyer's office. He was fixed in the office of Messrs Coldham and Enfield, attorneys and town-clerks in Nottingham, being forced, as no premium could be paid with him, to serve two years before he was articled,—a form which did not accordingly take place till 1802.

He now commenced learning Latin, in order to qualify himself better for the practice of his new profession. With some little assistance from one Cormick, a man who, owing to some treasonable practices, was living in Nottingham under a feigned name, Henry, ere the end of the year, was able to read Horace pretty fluently, and had begun Greek. He used to decline Greek verbs and nouns in going to and from his office, and got gradually into the pernicious practice of studying during his walks, so that physical exercise was no relaxation to him. He read at this time incessantly—gave up supping with the family—ate his milk in his own little room, and prosecuted his studies far into the night—studies which became almost encyclopædiac in their range, including law, Latin, Greek, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, chemistry, astronomy, electricity, drawing, music, mechanics, and last, not least, poetry. What a pity that such burning ambition, broad tastes, and indefatigable industry had not been combined with a stronger constitution and more fortunate circumstances!

After several attempts to be admitted as a member of a literary society in the town, and after he had been repeatedly rejected on account of his youth, he was at last elected, and astonished its members by delivering an extempore lecture on genius, which lasted two hours, was received with boundless enthusiasm, and induced the society to choose him for their professor of literature. This was wonderful precocity of speech, but was rather a remarkable than a healthy symptom. The case of young Betty the actor, and of many similar prodigies, proves that it is rather to be deprecated than desired, and that it is very seldom followed by a robust intellectual manhood. How often we have heard of or known students capable of feats nearly as great as this of White who have come to nothing, or to less than nothing and vanity,—great spouters

in debating societies, who have ended in preaching to beggarly accounts of empty benches, or have become the silent men of counting-houses, or have sunk into sordid obscurity,—and great prizemen, who have left the college loaded with laurels, groaning under gilded volumes, and have never been heard of more. On the other hand, the Pollok passes through his course little noticed,—the Bailey of “Festus” has one vote given him for a petty Greek prize, one “glorious nibble,” and no more,—the Milton is whipped at his college,—the Johnson leaves his without a degree,—and the Shelley is expelled from his. Had Kirke White been permitted to mature into a man, he would probably have looked back with humiliation on that flaming oration and these unthinking rapturous cheers.

He next commenced author in a periodical called the “Monthly Preceptor,” which followed what Southey justly thinks the absurd practice of giving prizes to boys and girls for the best themes. Henry gained first, when fifteen, a silver medal for a translation from Horace; and the next year a pair of 12-inch globes, value three guineas, for the best imaginary tour from London to Edinburgh, writing the latter after tea, and reading it to the family at supper. One good effect of these distinctions was, that it softened his father, and made him regard with less severity his prosecution of general studies and the ultimate change of his plan of life. He commenced also a series of writings in the “Monthly Mirror”—a production of some note in its day, beautifully printed, illustrated with good portraits, and to which such men as Bloomfield, author of the “Farmer’s Boy,” the gifted but unfortunate Dermody, Capel Loft, and Octavius Gilchrist, were stated contributors. Henry’s contributions were really superior, marked by sense, discrimination, invention, and learning far beyond his years. They attracted the notice of Hill, the proprietor of the magazine, and of Capel Loft, who had disintegrated Bloomfield from obscurity. They strongly encouraged our hero, and at their suggestion he began, about the close of 1802, to prepare a volume of poems. If this was a foolish scheme, the folly of it must in part be scored off to the charge of his patrons; it was a folly for which he smarted severely;

it was a folly at the same time which, by introducing him to Southey, tended indirectly to secure his fame; and it was a folly in which he has had but too many to keep him in countenance. Scarcely a man who has obtained celebrity in the literary world for a century, but commenced his career by some bad little book—generally a book of poems. Could a collection of all these abortions be formed, it were a most curious one, and would include such names as Southey, with his “Wat Tyler;” Byron, with that very juvenile volume of verse which preceded the “Hours of Idleness;” Wordsworth, with his “Descriptive Sketches;” Keats, with his first “Sonnets;” Shelley, with “Ahasuerus;” Coleridge, with his stilted imitations of Bowles; Scott, with his translation of Goetz von Berlichingen; Galt, with his ridiculous “Plays;” Hogg, with his “Mountain Bard;” and Kirke White with his schoolboy rhymes, contained in “Clifton Grove.” Authors generally wish such things forgotten; but if not for their intrinsic merit, yet for the light they cast upon the early history of poets, the marks and tests which they supply of poetic progress, and the lessons they teach about the feebleness of the strong, the infatuation and blindness of the gifted, the folly of the wise, they are worthy of preservation, and interesting to every philosophic student of poetry.

At last, in 1803, after many of those vexations, delays, disappointments, and chagrins incident to all incipient authorship, Henry’s first volume was fairly launched. It was dedicated to the Duchess of Devonshire, that illustrious but eccentric lady, who had canvassed at the Westminster election for Fox,—who had, in contradiction to fashionable use and wont, fed her children at her own breast,—and who, on account of her sympathies with liberty and Tell, had been apostrophised by Coleridge in the magnificent ode beginning,

“O lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure,
Who taught thee that heroic measure?”

This lady consented readily to receive the dedication, but took no further notice of the book. Henry sent copies to the principal reviews, along with a note to each stating his circumstances, and that his object in the publication was through

its sale, or through the attention it might excite, to pave his way for entrance into the Church. Among the rest, the "Monthly Review" received the volume, and the author looked forward with the intensest anxiety to its verdict on his poetry. That review was then the arbiter of letters, and its decisions were ultimate and without appeal. The judgment of the reviewers was unfavourable, although not expressed in truculent language. The severest sentence was as follows:—"The author is very anxious that critics should find in his volume something to commend, and he shall not be disappointed. We commend his exertions and his laudable endeavours to excel, but we cannot compliment him on having learned the difficult art of writing good poetry." Henry felt this very keenly; but found a safety-valve for emotions which otherwise might have destroyed him, in the act of writing a modest but spirited remonstrance to his reviewer. This elicited in the next number an apology, written by a different hand, and in a kindly spirit. Severe criticism is an ordeal to which all aspiring spirits are exposed, and its effects vary according to various constitutions and temperaments. The fierce spirit of Byron rebounds against the injustice,—he quaffs large goblets of wine, and then sits down to satirise his satirists, and to return their attacks with interest. Keats is more deeply affected, for the arrow of criticism has reached a side already pierced by the arrow of death, and he hangs over and handles the fatal article as if to suck out of the shaft into his veins the last particle of the poison. Cowper is assailed,—but he, like Laocoon, is wrestling with supernal or infernal serpents, and cares comparatively little for the abuse poured on him by the spectators of his mortal agony. Wordsworth and Southey first angrily answer their critics, and then proceed to pursue, more determinedly, their own way. Jeffrey tells them that they write ill, and they reply by writing worse, saying, like David, "I will yet be more vile than thus." Kirke White is neither thoroughly prostrated nor thoroughly stung into defiance; but, after a short paroxysm of feeling, forgets, or seeks to forget, his anguish in multifarious studies and in the exercises of devotion.

Meanwhile, Southey, who, with all his dogmatism and conceit, was a generous, warm-hearted man, stepped in to sympathise with and counsel poor Henry. He did for him what Sir Walter Scott *intended* to have done for Byron, after the appearance in the *Edinburgh Review* of the "Hours of Idleness"—he wrote him an encouraging letter. Byron did not need, and probably would have resented sympathy; and this Scott felt, else he would have accomplished his kind purpose; but to Kirke White it was very cheering,—the more as he was a warm admirer of Southey, and had already penned a sonnet in his honour—a sonnet which Southey discovered among his MSS. after his death. The letter contained not only warm condolence, but sound advice. Southey advised him to collect his pieces, polish them, and to publish them in a larger form, by subscription. Kirke White returned a grateful and manly reply, declining, however, for the present his proposal, and mentioning that he was about to enter the University of Cambridge, with a view to the Church. Southey says, with pardonable pride, that but for this correspondence, the "Remains" had never been published, and the name of White would have been soon forgotten.

To go to Cambridge Henry was induced by various considerations. He never liked the drudgeries of an attorney's office. A deafness, too, had gradually gained on him, and threatened to make him useless as a lawyer. He had, besides, after some early scepticism, become a decided Christian, greatly through the influence of the reading of Scott's "Force of Truth,"—a production distinguished for its masculine earnestness and powerful self-anatomy, and which acted on Henry as Law's "Serious Call" upon Johnson—it drew him with resistless force into serious reflection, and he rose from its perusal a "sadder," it might be, but certainly a "wiser" man. Henry determined to become a preacher of that "Truth" which had "forced" him into freedom. In vain did his relations resist his purpose. His mind was fixed; and while Messrs Coldham and Enfield consented to give up the remainder of his time, two clergymen, Messrs Pigott and Dashwood, exerted themselves to procure the means

for his subsistence at Cambridge. Till these arrangements should be completed, he obtained leave of absence from his employers for a month, and spent it in his favourite village of Wilford, at the foot of the Clifton woods. On his return to Nottingham, he received intelligence that the plans of his friends were frustrated. This produced deep disappointment; but he set himself more resolutely to his legal studies, which he had neglected while preparing for the University. His passion for study was now exaggerated into a disease. He allowed himself no time for relaxation, and ate and slept in snatches—nay, sometimes did not go to bed at all. Such was what Southey strikingly calls “his desperate and deadly ardour.” This could not last long, and it issued in a severe fit of illness, from the shock of which his constitution never altogether recovered.

His hopes were now again renewed. Through the influence of Mr Simeon of Cambridge, the well-known author of the “Skeletons of Sermons,” he was promised a sizarship in St John’s, Cambridge, and £30 annually besides. His brother Neville promised £20; and his mother, it was thought, could allow him £20 or £15 more. He left, accordingly, his employers in October 1804, bearing with him their warmest testimony to his diligence and worth. He was advised, ere entering the University, to *degrade*, as it is technically called,—that is, to study privately for a year under some qualified person. He went, therefore, to the Rev. Mr Grainger of Winterringham, in Lincolnshire, where he studied so hard as to throw himself into a second dangerous illness, but made, in the course of twelve months, amazing proficiency.

In October 1805, he went to Cambridge. He did not relish the place much at first; but, by and bye, says, “I now begin to feel at home, and relish my silent and thoughtful cup of tea more than ever.” One has a melancholy delight in thinking of this young and ardent spirit, the hue of death contending with the flush of high ambition on his cheek, seated as yet unknowing and unknown, in the centre of the proud University, beside his “blazing fire,” and over his silent and thoughtful cup of tea, in the lonely autumn evenings, and striving to

imagine himself happy and at home. Alas! his home was in another world; and not happiness, but only severe study, harassing anxiety, a heart bleeding with suppressed passion, and a head throbbing with half-formed madness, were to be his portion for the one year he was to remain on earth. It is curious to notice, that the letter from which we have copied the above sentence is dated October 18, 1805, and that on October 19, 1806, he breathed his last.

We cannot continue to dwell so particularly on the rest of Henry's short life. At college, his unexampled industry carried all before it. He was first man in every examination, was set down as a medallist, and expected to take a Senior Wrangler's degree. His constitution, however, and spirits began to fail. He sometimes, in horror at solitude, ran from room to room of his College, imploring society; his nights were nights of restless misery; and he was assailed by strong palpitations of the heart. When told to relax, he went once and again to London, where the incessant bustle and excitement did him harm instead of good. Once in his rooms he lost consciousness, fell, and was found bleeding in various places. It added to all this, that, as we judge from certain hints in his letters, he was deeply in love, without any prospect of his passion resulting in marriage. The Fiend of Madness now seemed in the act of "pausing ere it struck" the hapless victim, when the merciful Angel of Death stepped in, and removed him from the path of the blow. His brother Neville, ever affectionate, hearing of his alarming illness, hurried to visit him. He found Henry delirious, and approaching death. He barely recognised him, but immediately after sunk into stupor; and on Sabbath, October 19, his gentle, sorely-tried, and laborious spirit was released from its yoke.

The death of Henry Kirke White made a considerable sensation at Cambridge. Yet, although famous in his own College, and although his tutors and friends expected very great things from him, he was not generally known in the University. Byron at least, a contemporary, says that it was strange how little he was known, and the reputation he did enjoy was rather as a promising mathematician than as a poet. On his

decease, Mr B. Maddock, an intimate friend of his, wrote Southey, informing him of the event. In reply, Southey offered his aid in the publication of White's papers and correspondence. These were unreservedly intrusted to his charge. Coleridge was present along with Southey when the box containing them was opened, and both were amazed at the proofs it exhibited of industry and versatility. It contained essays on law, chemistry, electricity, Latin and Greek, history, divinity, chronology, the Fathers, &c.; fragments of three tragedies; the plan of a history of Nottingham; several poems in Greek, among others, the commencement of a translation of *Samson Agonistes*. Southey says, "I have inspected all the existing manuscripts of Chatterton, and they excited less wonder than these." The result was the publication, in two volumes, of the "*Remains of Henry Kirke White*," including all the poems that could be recovered, along with those previously printed, his correspondence, miscellaneous essays, and a life by Southey—altogether one of the most pleasing and popular books in British literature.

Henry Kirke White must constantly be regarded through the medium of Southey's mild emblazonment, and of his own amiable character. He was one of the most blameless of men—affectionate to his friends, pious to his God, humble and devoted, never happy except when cultivating his own mind, or doing good to others. Like Milton, he

"The lowliest duties on himself did lay."

He visited the sick, taught the young, counselled those who were in perplexity, and wrote letters to those that were afflicted with doubt, and tossed with spiritual tempests. He must not be regarded as a mere "ambitious student in ill health," but as one who, as Burke said of his son, "had in him a salient living spring of generous and manly action, and who had no enjoyment whatever but in the performance of some duty." Yet if he had a fault, it lay in ambition. His desire to excel became almost an insanity or crime; and to it he sacrificed not only his own health, happiness, and life, but the happiness of his dearest relatives. He ought to have spared himself for their sakes, as well as for his own. Shall we call him a

sublime suicide before the wheels of Fame? Best feature of all in his character was his power of silent endurance. He "consumed his own smoke." He complained, indeed, bitterly in some of his poems and private letters; but before the world he showed his disappointed love and ambition only in the paleness of his cheek, not in the trouble of his eye, or in the agitation of his bearing. The fire that devoured him was a hidden as well as a vestal flame.

In coming to the consideration of his works and genius, it is extremely difficult, so to speak, to *insulate* ourselves from all considerations connected with his lovely character, his brief laborious life, and his premature end. That he was a man of high talents, of powers of fancy and eloquence of a rare order, as well as of indomitable energy, and great assimilative and acquisitive capacity, must be conceded by all. But there are not a few who deny him the possession of original genius, and who even in the uniform good taste and good sense which he discovered at so early an age find an argument in favour of their hypothesis. Creation sprung from Chaos; and so great genius almost always commences with extravagance and riotous richness of unconsolidated thought. The present races of animals seem the old miscreations and monsters of geology elaborately polished, reduced, and tamed down. But these ancient rugged shapes required to be, ere the others could be fashioned out of them; so the polish and perfectionment of authorship spring out of the early roughness and savage wildness of genius. Now of this there is nothing in Kirke White, unless we except the "Christiad," which, but for his other achievements, might be called the spasm of weakness rather than the extravagance of early strength. His poetry is generally measured, and regulated often to the brink of tameness. Even in his professedly wild efforts, such as "Gondoline," there is more of method than of the fine madness of poetry. All young poets imitate others—but in their imitations, if they be of the true and sovereign seed, you see glimpses of originality, and discern a power that will soon burst all trammels, and assert its birthright of independence. We suspect that Kirke White would have remained more or less an imi-

tator for life. It was said of him at college, that he had "genius without any of its eccentricities." This could not be said of his contemporary at college, Byron—of his biographer, Southey, in youth—of his sympathiser, Coleridge—nor, we suspect, of any really great genius at the same period of life. Had any stranger seen the young Samson, the pride and hope of Israel, he might possibly have cried out "What a noble figure, but what a pity and shame these long and trailing locks, why does he not shear them?"—not knowing that God had "hung" his heroism in his "hair." Eccentricities, particularly in youth, and when entirely unaffected, are the long locks of the giant, and if shorn off prematurely, his strength departs, and he becomes weak as other men.

After all, that "good sense" which Southey ascribes to Kirke White was his principal quality both as a man and a poet. It appears to great advantage in those little essays which Southey has printed, and which suggest the idea that Kirke White might have become an admirable prose writer—so clear is their thought, and so chaste yet vigorous their diction. Next to good sense, his leading quality is sentimental fancy. This sparkles out best in his minor effusions, such as, "To the Herb Rosemary;" his song, "Softly, softly blow, ye Breezes;" "The Star of Bethlehem," that beautiful holy lyric; and his fine "Ode to the Harvest Moon," especially the words which often recur to us in the glorious nights of Autumn—

"How many a female eye will roam
Along the road,
To see the load,
The last dear load of Harvest Home!"

Next to these minor pieces, the poems that interest his readers most are those in which he pours out his secret misery and disappointment. Such nightingale plaints of poets, wailing through their midnight, always secure an audience, expressing as they do sorrows common to all hearts, in language which only poets can use. Plaintive poetry is more generally popular than even mirthful—for this reason, that while many have scarcely known mirth, and have little sympathy with it,

all have known sorrow. Hence "The Flowers of the Forest," "Highland Mary," and "Man was made to Mourn," are more popular than even "Willie brewed a peck o' maut," "Duncan Gray," or "Tam O' Shanter;" and "Auld Langsyne" is more highly prized for the shade of sadness which slightly tinges its joy. In our author's poems on "Disappointment," "Despair," &c., there is perhaps more of bitterness than of true poetic melody, but our sympathy with the poet and his sad lot compels our attention and our tears.

"Clifton Grove," were it published now, would probably be called a feeble belated echo of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." It reads smoothly, and has some pleasing description, but can scarcely be called high poetry. The "Christiad" is, in our judgment, a total failure. The Cross becomes to poor Henry a stumbling-block in a literary sense—the fire and energy are forced—the prose speeches of the devils are absolutely contemptible—and no one regrets that it has been left a fragment. The subject is too high a thing for him, and would have remained so, we suspect, had he reached the maturity of his powers. The verses entitled "Time" are of a much superior order. If they contain little that is absolutely original, they express in a new and poetical style many of those pensive emotions—those "solemn meditations of the night," which cross all thoughtful minds. Who had not had again and again the overwhelming conception of a Past Eternity, had not felt his brain reeling under the burden of the thought, and as if it were a dream of nightmare rather than an absolute reality—yet who till Kirke White had adequately voiced forth the awful idea—

" Oh, it is fearful, on the midnight couch,
When the rude rushing winds forget to rave,
And the pale moon, that through the casement high
Surveys the sleepless muser, stamps the hour
Of utter silence ; it is fearful then
To steer the mind, in deadly solitude,
Up the vague stream of probability,
To wind the mighty secrets of *the Past*,
And turn the key of Time ! Oh, who can strive
To comprehend the vast, the awful truth,

Of the *Eternity that hath gone bye,*
 And not recoil from the dismaying sense
 Of human impotence ?”

On the whole, if this poem had been finished in a style worthy of the commencement, it would have ranked Kirke White as a moral and sacred poet not very far from the Blairs, Youngs, Cowpers, and Polloks—at least in purpose, spirit, tone, and talent, if not in richness and strength of genius.

We quit the subject of Kirke White with lingering and loving emotions. A high career of some kind was undoubtedly before him when he was cut off “as the foam upon the water.” His great general capacity, accomplishments, perseverance, and piety, seemed to point to the upper seats in the Synagogue of the Church of England; and, had he lived, he might by this time have been a venerable bishop of seventy-one years of age, and the author of many valuable theological, scientific, and critical works—ranking, if not with the Jeremy Taylors, Horseleys, and Warburtons—certainly with the Lowths, the Hurds, the Hebers, and the Sumners. But he would, we suspect in this case, and without any material loss to the world, have been compelled to abandon for ever the fair domains of poetry.

THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

KIRKE WHITE'S POETICAL WORKS.

CLIFTON GROVE.—DEDICATION.

To Her Grace the Duchess of Devonshire, the following trifling effusions of a very youthful Muse are, by permission, dedicated by her Grace's much obliged and grateful servant,

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

Nottingham.

PREFACE.

THE following attempts in verse are laid before the public with extreme diffidence. The author is very conscious that the juvenile efforts of a youth, who has not received the polish of academical discipline, and who has been but sparingly blessed with opportunities for the prosecution of scholastic pursuits, must necessarily be defective in the accuracy and finished elegance which mark the works of the man who has passed his life in the retirement of his study, furnishing his mind with images, and at the same time attaining the power of disposing those images to the best advantage.

The unpremeditated effusions of a boy, from his thirteenth year, employed, not in the acquisition of literary information, but in the more active business of life, must not be expected to exhibit any considerable portion of the correctness of a Virgil, or the vigorous compression of a Horace. Men are not, I believe, frequently known to bestow much labour on their amusements; and these poems were, most of them, written merely to beguile a leisure hour, or to fill up the languid intervals of studies of a severer nature.

Πας το οικειος εργον αγαπη, "Every one loves his own work," says the Stagyrte; but it was no overweening affection of this kind which induced this publication. Had the author relied on his own judgment only, these poems would not, in all probability, ever have seen the light.

Perhaps it may be asked of him, What are his motives for this publication? He answers—Simply these: the facilitation, through its means, of those studies which, from his earliest infancy, have been the principal objects of his ambition;

and the increase of the capacity to pursue those inclinations which may one day place him in an honourable station in the scale of society.

The principal poem in this little collection—Clifton Grove—is, he fears, deficient in numbers and harmonious coherency of parts. It is, however, merely to be regarded as a description of a nocturnal ramble in that charming retreat, accompanied with such reflections as the scene naturally suggested. It was written twelve months ago, when the author was in his sixteenth year. The Miscellanies are, some of them, the productions of a very early age. Of the Odes, that "To an Early Primrose" was written at thirteen; the others are of a later date. The Sonnets are chiefly irregular; they have, perhaps, no other claim to that specific denomination, than that they consist only of fourteen lines.

Such are the Poems towards which I entreat the lenity of the public. The critic will doubtless find in them much to condemn; he may likewise possibly discover something to commend. Let him scan my faults with an indulgent eye; and in the work of that correction which I invite, let him remember he is holding the iron mace of criticism over the flimsy superstructure of a youth of seventeen; and remembering that, may he forbear from crushing, by too much rigour, the painted butterfly whose transient colours may otherwise be capable of affording a moment's innocent amusement.

H. K. WHITE.

Nottingham.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

CLIFTON GROVE : A SKETCH.

Lo ! in the west, fast fades the lingering light,
And day's last vestige takes its silent flight.
No more is heard the woodman's measured stroke,
Which with the dawn from yonder dingle broke ;
No more, hoarse clamouring o'er the uplifted head,
The crows assembling seek their wind-rock'd bed ;
Still'd is the village hum—the woodland sounds
Have ceased to echo o'er the dewy grounds,
And general silence reigns, save when, below,
The murmuring Trent is scarcely heard to flow ; 10
And save when, swung by 'nighted rustic late,
Oft, on its hinge, rebounds the jarring gate ;
Or when the sheep-bell, in the distant vale,
Breathes its wild music on the downy gale.

Now, when the rustic wears the social smile,
Released from day and its attendant toil,
And draws his household round their evening fire,
And tells the oft-told tales that never tire ;
Or where the town's blue turrets dimly rise,
And manufacture taints the ambient skies, 20
The pale mechanic leaves the labouring loom,
The air-pent hold, the pestilential room,

And rushes out, impatient to begin 23
The stated course of customary sin :
Now, now my solitary way I bend
Where solemn groves in awful state impend ;
And cliffs, that boldly rise above the plain,
Bespeak, bless'd Clifton ! thy sublime domain.
Here lonely wandering o'er the sylvan bower,
I come to pass the meditative hour ; 30
To bid awhile the strife of passion cease,
And woo the calms of solitude and peace.
And oh ! thou sacred Power, who rear'st on high
Thy leafy throne where waving poplars sigh !
Genius of woodland shades ! whose mild control
Steals with resistless witchery to the soul,
Come with thy wonted ardour, and inspire
My glowing bosom with thy hallow'd fire.
And thou, too, Fancy ! from thy starry sphere,
Where to the hymning orbs thou lend'st thine ear, 40
Do thou descend, and bless my ravish'd sight,
Veil'd in soft visions of serene delight.
At thy command the gale that passes by
Bears in its whispers mystic harmony.
Thou wav'st thy wand, and lo ! what forms appear !
On the dark cloud what giant shapes career !
The ghosts of Ossian skim the misty vale,
And hosts of sylphids on the moonbeams sail.
This gloomy alcove, darkling to the sight,
Where meeting trees create eternal night, 50
Save, when from yonder stream the sunny ray,
Reflected, gives a dubious gleam of day,
Recalls, endearing to my alter'd mind,
Times when, beneath the boxen hedge reclined,
I watch'd the lapwing to her clamorous brood ;
Or lured the robin to its scatter'd food ;

Or woke with song the woodland echo wild, 57
And at each gay response delighted smiled.
How oft, when childhood threw its golden ray
Of gay romance o'er every happy day,
Here would I run, a visionary boy,
When the hoarse tempest shook the vaulted sky,
And, fancy-led, beheld the Almighty's form
Sternly careering on the eddying storm ;
And heard, while awe congeal'd my inmost soul,
His voice terrific in the thunders roll !
With secret joy, I view'd with vivid glare
The vollied lightnings cleave the sullen air ;
And, as the warring winds around reviled,
With awful pleasure big, I heard and smiled. 70
Beloved remembrance !—memory which endears
This silent spot to my advancing years.
Here dwells eternal peace, eternal rest ;
In shades like these to live is to be blest.
While happiness evades the busy crowd,
In rural coverts loves the maid to shroud.
And thou, too, Inspiration ! whose wild flame
Shoots 'with electric swiftness through the frame,
Thou here dost love to sit with upturn'd eye,
And listen to the stream that murmurs by, 80
The woods that wave, the gray owl's silken flight,
The mellow music of the listening night.
Congenial calms ! more welcome to my breast
Than maddening joy in dazzling lustre dress'd,
To Heaven my prayers, my daily prayers I raise,
That ye may bless my unambitious days,
Withdrawn, remote, from all the haunts of strife ;
May trace with me the lowly vale of life,
And when her banner Death shall o'er me wave,
May keep your peaceful vigils on my grave ! 90

Now as I rove, where wide the prospect grows, 91
A livelier light upon my vision flows.
No more above the embracing branches meet,
No more the river gurgles at my feet,
But seen deep down the cliff's impending side,
Through hanging woods, now gleams its silver tide.
Dim is my upland path—across the green
Fantastic shadows fling, yet oft between
The checker'd glooms the moon her chaste ray sheds,
Where knots of bluebells droop their graceful heads, 100
And beds of violets, blooming 'mid the trees,
Load with waste fragrance the nocturnal breeze.

Say, why does Man, while to his opening sight
Each shrub presents a source of chaste delight,
And Nature bids for him her treasures flow,
And gives to him alone his bliss to know,
Why does he pant for Vice's deadly charms?
Why clasp the syren Pleasure to his arms,
And suck deep draughts of her voluptuous breath,
Though fraught with ruin, infamy, and death? 110
Could he who thus to vile enjoyment clings
Know what calm joy from purer sources springs;
Could he but feel how sweet, how free from strife,
The harmless pleasures of a harmless life,
No more his soul would pant for joys impure,
The deadly chalice would no more allure,
But the sweet potion he was wont to sip
Would turn to poison on his conscious lip.

Fair Nature! thee, in all thy varied charms,
Fain would I clasp for ever in my arms! 120
Thine are the sweets which never, never sate,
Thine still remain through all the storms of fate.
Though not for me 'twas Heaven's divine command
To roll in acres of paternal land,

Yet still my lot is bless'd, while I enjoy 125
Thine opening beauties with a lover's eye.

Happy is he who, though the cup of bliss
Has ever shunn'd him when he thought to kiss,
Who, still in abject poverty or pain,
Can count with pleasure what small joys remain : 130
Though, were his sight convey'd from zone to zone,
He would not find one spot of ground his own,
Yet, as he looks around, he cries with glee,
These bounding prospects all were made for me :
For me yon waving fields their burden bear,
For me yon labourer guides the shining share,
While happy I in idle ease recline,
And mark the glorious visions as they shine !
This is the charm, by sages often told,
Converting all it touches into gold. 140
Content can soothe where'er by fortune placed,
Can rear a garden in the desert waste.

How lovely, from this hill's superior height,
Spreads the wide view before my straining sight !
O'er many a varied mile of lengthening ground,
E'en to the blue-ridged hill's remotest bound,
My ken is borne ; while o'er my head serene
The silver moon illumines the misty scene :
Now shining clear, now darkening in the glade,
In all the soft varieties of shade. 150

Behind me, lo ! the peaceful hamlet lies,
The drowsy god has seal'd the cotter's eyes.
No more, where late the social faggot blazed,
The vacant peal resounds, by little raised ;
But lock'd in silence, o'er Arion's¹ star
The slumbering Night rolls on her velvet car :

¹ The constellation Delphinus. For authority for this appellation, see Ovid's
'Fasti,' b. xi. 113.

The church bell tolls, deep sounding down the glade, 157
The solemn hour for walking spectres made ;
The simple ploughboy, wakening with the sound,
Listens aghast, and turns him startled round,
Then stops his ears, and strives to close his eyes,
Lest at the sound some grisly ghost should rise.

Now ceased the long, the monitory toll,
Returning silence stagnates in the soul ;
Save when, disturb'd by dreams, with wild affright,
The deep-mouth'd mastiff bays the troubled night :
Or where the village alehouse crowns the vale,
The creaking signpost whistles to the gale.
A little onward let me bend my way,
Where the moss'd seat invites the traveller's stay. 170
That spot, oh ! yet it is the very same ;
That hawthorn gives it shade, and gave it name :
There yet the primrose opes its earliest bloom,
There yet the violet sheds its first perfume,
And in the branch that rears above the rest
The robin unmolested builds its nest.
'Twas here, when Hope, presiding o'er my breast,
In vivid colours every prospect dress'd :
'Twas here, reclining, I indulged her dreams,
And lost the hour in visionary schemes. 180
Here, as I press once more the ancient seat,
Why, bland deceiver ! not renew the cheat ?
Say, can a few short years this change achieve,
That thy illusions can no more deceive ?
Time's sombrous tints have every view o'erspread,
And thou too, gay seducer ! art thou fled ?
Though vain thy promise, and the suit severe,
Yet thou couldst guile Misfortune of her tear,
And oft thy smiles across life's gloomy way
Could throw a gleam of transitory day. 190

How gay, in youth, the flattering future seems! 191
How sweet is manhood in the infant's dreams!
The dire mistake too soon is brought to light,
And all is buried in redoubled night.
Yet some can rise superior to the pain,
And in their breasts the charmer Hope retain;
While others, dead to feeling, can survey,
Unmoved, their fairest prospects fade away:
But yet a few there be—too soon o'ercast!—
Who shrink unhappy from the adverse blast, 200
And woo the first bright gleam, which breaks the gloom,
To gild the silent slumbers of the tomb.
So in these shades the early primrose blows,
Too soon deceived by suns and melting snows;
So falls untimely on the desert waste,
Its blossoms withering in the northern blast.

Now pass'd whate'er the upland heights display,
Down the steep cliff I wind my devious way:
Oft rousing, as the rustling path I beat,
The timid hare from its accustom'd seat. 210
And oh! how sweet this walk o'erhung with wood,
That winds the margin of the solemn flood!
What rural objects steal upon the sight!
What rising views prolong the calm delight!
The brooklet branching from the silver Trent,
The whispering birch by every zephyr bent,
The woody island, and the naked mead,
The lowly hut half-hid in groves of reed,
The rural wicket, and the rural stile,
And frequent interspersed, the woodman's pile. 220
Above, below, where'er I turn my eyes,
Rocks, waters, woods, in grand succession rise,
High up the cliff the varied groves ascend,
And mournful larches o'er the wave impend.

Around, what sounds, what magic sounds arise, 225
What glimmering scenes salute my ravish'd eyes !
Soft sleep the waters on their pebbly bed,
The woods wave gently o'er my drooping head,
And, swelling slow, comes wafted on the wind,
Lorn Progne's note from distant copse behind. 230
Still every rising sound of calm delight
Stamps but the fearful silence of the night,
Save when is heard between each dreary rest,
Discordant, from her solitary nest,
The owl, dull screaming to the wandering moon,
Now riding, cloud-wrapp'd, near her highest noon :
Or when the wild duck, southering, hither rides,
And plunges sullen in the sounding tides.

How oft in this sequester'd spot, when youth
Gave to each tale the holy force of truth, 240
Have I long linger'd, while the milkmaid sung
The tragic legend, till the woodland rung !
That tale, so sad ! which, still to memory dear,
From its sweet source can call the sacred tear,
And (lull'd to rest stern Reason's harsh control)
Steal its soft magic to the passive soul ;
These hallow'd shades, these trees that woo the wind,
Recall its faintest features to my mind.
A hundred passing years, with march sublime,
Have swept beneath the silent wing of time, 250
Since, in yon hamlet's solitary shade,
Reclusely dwelt the far-famed Clifton Maid,
The beauteous Margaret ; for her each swain
Confess'd in private his peculiar pain,
In secret sigh'd, a victim to despair,
Nor dared to hope to win the peerless fair.
No more the shepherd, on the blooming mead,
Attuned to gaiety his artless reed ;

No more entwined the pansied wreath, to deck 259
His favourite wether's unpolluted neck ;
But listless, by yon bubbling stream reclined,
He mix'd his sobbings with the passing wind,
Bemoan'd his hapless love ; or, boldly bent,
Far from these smiling fields a rover went,
O'er distant lands, in search of ease, to roam,
A self-will'd exile from his native home.

Yet not to all the maid express'd disdain ;
Her Bateman loved, nor loved the youth in vain.
Full oft, low whispering o'er these arching boughs,
The echoing vault responded to their vows, 270
As here, deep hidden from the glare of day,
Enamour'd, oft they took their secret way.

Yon bosky dingle, still the rustics name ;
'Twas there the blushing maid confess'd her flame.
Down yon green lane they oft were seen to hie,
When evening slumber'd on the western sky.
That blasted yew, that mouldering walnut bare,
Each bears mementos of the fated pair.

One eve, when Autumn loaded every breeze
With the fallen honours of the mourning trees, 280
The maiden waited at the accustom'd bower,
And waited long beyond the appointed hour,
Yet Bateman came not ;—o'er the woodland drear
Howling portentous did the winds career ;
And bleak and dismal on the leafless woods
The fitful rains rush'd down in sullen floods ;
The night was dark ; as, now and then, the gale
Paused for a moment, Margaret listen'd, pale ;
But through the covert to her anxious ear
No rustling footstep spoke her lover near. 290
Strange fears now fill'd her breast—she knew not why,
She sigh'd, and Bateman's name was in each sigh.

She hears a noise—'tis he!—he comes at last!— 293
Alas! 'twas but the gale which hurried past;
But now she hears a quickening footstep sound,
Lightly it comes, and nearer does it bound;
'Tis Bateman's self!—he springs into her arms,
'Tis he that clasps, and chides her vain alarms!
 'Yet why this silence?—I have waited long,
And the cold storm has yell'd the trees among. 300
And now thou'rt here my fears are fled—yet speak,
Why does the salt tear moisten on thy cheek?
Say, what is wrong?' Now through a parting cloud
The pale moon peer'd from her tempestuous shroud,
And Bateman's face was seen; 'twas deadly white,
And sorrow seem'd to sicken in his sight.
'Oh, speak, my love!' again the maid conjured,
'Why is thy heart in sullen woe immured?'
He raised his head, and thrice essay'd to tell,
Thrice from his lips the unfinish'd accents fell; 310
When thus at last reluctantly he broke
His boding silence, and the maid bespoke:
 'Grieve not, my love, but ere the morn advance,
I on these fields must cast my parting glance;
For three long years, by cruel fate's command,
I go to languish in a foreign land.
Oh, Margaret! omens dire have met my view,
Say, when far distant, wilt thou bear me true?
Should honours tempt thee, and should riches see,
Wouldst thou forget thine ardent vows to me, 320
And, on the silken couch of wealth reclined,
Banish thy faithful Bateman from thy mind?'
 'Oh! why,' replies the maid, 'my faith thus prove?
Canst thou, ah! canst thou, then, suspect my love?
Hear me, just God! if from my traitorous heart
My Bateman's fond remembrance e'er shall part;

If, when he hail again his native shore, 327
He finds his Margaret true to him no more,
May fiends of hell, and every power of dread,
Conjoin'd, then drag me from my perjured bed,
And hurl me headlong down these awful steeps,
To find deserved death in yonder deeps !'¹

Thus spake the maid, and from her finger drew
A golden ring, and broke it quick in two :
One half she in her lovely bosom hides,
The other, trembling, to her love confides.
'This bind the vow,' she said, 'this mystic charm
No future recantation can disarm ;
The right vindictive does the fates involve,
No tears can move it, no regrets dissolve.' 340

She ceased. The death-bird gave a dismal cry,
The river moan'd, the wild gale whistled by,
And once again the lady of the night
Behind a heavy cloud withdrew her light.
Trembling, she view'd these portents with dismay ;
But gently Bateman kiss'd her fears away :
Yet still he felt conceal'd a secret smart,
Still melancholy bodings fill'd his heart.

When to the distant land the youth was sped,
A lonely life the moody maiden led. 350
Still would she trace each dear, each well-known
walk,

Still by the moonlight to her love would talk,
And fancy, as she paced among the trees,
She heard his whispers in the dying breeze.
Thus two years glided on in silent grief ;
The third her bosom own'd the kind relief :
Absence had cool'd her love—the impoverish'd flame
Was dwindling fast, when lo ! the tempter came ;

¹ This part of the Trent is commonly called 'The Clifton Deepes.'

He offer'd wealth, and all the joys of life, 359
And the weak maid became another's wife !

Six guilty months had mark'd the false one's crime,
When Bateman hail'd once more his native clime.

Sure of her constancy, elate he came,
The lovely partner of his soul to claim ;
Light was his heart, as up the well-known way
He bent his steps, and all his thoughts were gay.
Oh ! who can paint his agonising throes,
When on his ear the fatal news arose !
Chill'd with amazement, senseless with the blow,
He stood a marble monument of woe ; 370

Till, call'd to all the horrors of despair,
He smote his brow, and tore his horrent hair ;
Then rush'd impetuous from the dreadful spot,
And sought those scenes (by memory ne'er forgot),
Those scenes, the witness of their growing flame,
And now like witnesses of Margaret's shame.

'Twas night—he sought the river's lonely shore,
And traced again their former wanderings o'er.
Now on the bank in silent grief he stood,
And gazed intently on the stealing flood. 380

Death in his mien and madness in his eye,
He watch'd the waters as they murmur'd by ;
Bade the base murderess triumph o'er his grave—
Prepared to plunge into the whelming wave.

Yet still he stood irresolutely bent,
Religion sternly stay'd his rash intent.
He knelt. Cool play'd upon his cheek the wind,
And fann'd the fever of his maddening mind,
The willows waved, the stream it sweetly swept,
The paly moonbeam on its surface slept, 390
And all was peace ;—he felt the general calm
O'er his rack'd bosom shed a genial balm :

When, casting far behind his streaming eye, 393
He saw the Grove—in fancy saw her lie,
His Margaret, lull'd in Germain's¹ arms to rest,
And all the demon rose within his breast.
Convulsive now, he clench'd his trembling hand,
Cast his dark eye once more upon the land,
Then, at one spring, he spurn'd the yielding bank,
And in the calm deceitful current sank. 400

Sad, on the solitude of night, the sound,
As in the stream he plunged, was heard around :
Then all was still—the wave was rough no more,
The river swept as sweetly as before ;
The willows waved, the moonbeams shone serene,
And peace returning brooded o'er the scene.

Now, see upon the perjured fair one hang
Remorse's glooms and never ceasing pang.
Full well she knew, repentant now too late,
She soon must bow beneath the stroke of fate. 410
But, for the babe she bore beneath her breast,
The offended God prolong'd her life unblest'd.
But fast the fleeting moments roll'd away,
And near and nearer drew the dreaded day ;
That day foredoom'd to give her child the light,
And hurl its mother to the shades of night.
The hour arrived, and from the wretched wife
The guiltless baby struggled into life.
As night drew on, around her bed a band
Of friends and kindred kindly took their stand ; 420
In holy prayer they pass'd the creeping time,
Intent to expiate her awful crime.
Their prayers were fruitless. As the midnight
came

A heavy sleep oppress'd each weary frame.

¹ Germain is the traditionary name of her husband.

In vain they strove against the o'erwhelming load, 425
Some power unseen their drowsy lids bestrode.
They slept till in the blushing eastern sky
The blooming Morning oped her dewy eye ;
Then wakening wide they sought the ravish'd bed,
But lo ! the hapless Margaret was fled ; 430
And never more the weeping train were doom'd
To view the false one, in the deeps entomb'd.

The neighbouring rustics told that in the night
They heard such screams as froze them with affright ;
And many an infant, at its mother's breast,
Started dismay'd from its unthinking rest.
And even now, upon the heath forlorn,
They show the path down which the fair was borne,
By the fell demons, to the yawning wave,
Her own and murder'd lover's mutual grave. 440

Such is the tale, so sad, to memory dear,
Which oft in youth has charm'd my listening ear,
That tale, which bade me find redoubled sweets
In the drear silence of these dark retreats ;
And even now, with melancholy power,
Adds a new pleasure to the lonely hour.
'Mid all the charms by magic Nature given
To this wild spot, this sublunary heaven,
With double joy enthusiast Fancy leans
On the attendant legend of the scenes. 450
This sheds a fairy lustre on the floods,
And breathes a mellow gloom upon the woods ;
This, as the distant cataract swells around,
Gives a romantic cadence to the sound ;
This, and the deepening glen, the alley green,
The silver stream with sedgy tufts between,
The massy rock, the wood-encompass'd leas,
The broom-clad islands, and the nodding trees,

The lengthening vista, and the present gloom, 459
The verdant pathway breathing waste perfume:
These are thy charms, the joys which these impart
Bind thee, bless'd Clifton! close around my heart.

Dear native Grove! where'er my devious track,
To thee will Memory lead the wanderer back.
Whether in Arno's polish'd vales I stray,
Or where 'Oswego's swamps' obstruct the day;
Or wander lone, where, wildering and wide,
The tumbling torrent laves St Gothard's side;
Or by old Tejo's classic margent muse,
Or stand entranced with Pyrenean views; 470
Still, still to thee, where'er my footsteps roam,
My heart shall point, and lead the wanderer home.
When splendour offers, and when fame incites,
I'll pause, and think of all thy dear delights,
Reject the boon, and, wearied with the change,
Renounce the wish which first induced to range;
Turn to these scenes, these well-known scenes once more,
Trace once again old Trent's romantic shore,
And, tired with worlds and all their busy ways,
Here waste the little remnant of my days. 480
But if the Fates should this last wish deny,
And doom me on some foreign shore to die;
Oh! should it please the world's supernal King,
That weltering waves my funeral dirge shall sing;
Or that my corse should, on some desert strand,
Lie stretch'd beneath the Simoom's blasting hand;
Still, though unwept I find a stranger tomb,
My sprite shall wander through this favourite gloom,
Ride on the wind that sweeps the leafless grove,
Sigh on the wood-blast of the dark alcove, 490
Sit a lorn spectre on yon well-known grave,
And mix its moanings with the desert wave.

TIME : A POEM.¹

GENIUS of musings, who, the midnight hour
Wasting in woods or haunted forests wild,
Dost watch Orion in his arctic tower,
Thy dark eye fix'd as in some holy trance ;
Or when the vollied lightnings cleave the air,
And Ruin gaunt bestrides the wingèd storm,
Sitt'st in some lonely watch-tower, where thy lamp,
Faint blazing, strikes the fisher's eye from far,
And, 'mid the howl of elements, unmoved,
Dost ponder on the awful scene, and trace 10
The vast effect to its superior source—
Spirit, attend my lowly benison!
For now I strike to themes of import high
The solitary lyre ; and, borne by thee
Above this narrow cell, I celebrate
The mysteries of Time !

 Him who, august,
Was ere these worlds were fashion'd—ere the sun
Sprang from the east, or Lucifer display'd
His glowing cresset in the arch of morn,
Or Vesper gilded the serener eve : 20
Yea, He had been for an eternity!
Had swept unvarying from eternity
The harp of desolation—ere his tones,
At God's command, assumed a milder strain,
And startled on his watch, in the vast deep,
Chaos's sluggish sentry, and evoked
From the dark void the smiling universe.

¹ This poem was begun either during the publication of 'Clifton Grove,' or shortly afterwards, but never completed: some of the detached parts were among his latest productions.

Chain'd to the grovelling frailties of the flesh, 28
Mere mortal man, unpurged from earthly dross,
Cannot survey, with fix'd and steady eye,
The dim uncertain gulf, which now the Muse,
Adventurous, would explore ; but dizzy grown,
He topples down the abyss. If he would scan
The fearful chasm, and catch a transient glimpse
Of its unfathomable depths, that so
His mind may turn with double joy to God,
His only certainty and resting-place,
He must put off awhile this mortal vest,
And learn to follow, without giddiness,
To heights where all is vision and surprise, 40
And vague conjecture. He must waste by night
The studious taper, far from all resort
Of crowds and folly, in some still retreat ;
High on the beetling promontory's crest,
Or in the caves of the vast wilderness,
Where, compass'd round with Nature's wildest shapes,
He may be driven to centre all his thoughts
In the great Architect, who lives confess'd
In rocks, and seas, and solitary wastes.
So has divine Philosophy, with voice 50
Mild as the murmurs of the moonlight wave,
Tutor'd the heart of him, who now awakes,
Touching the chords of solemn minstrelsy,
His faint, neglected song—intent to snatch
Some vagrant blossom from the dangerous steep
Of Poesy, a bloom of such a hue,
So sober, as may not unseemly suit
With Truth's severer brow ; and one withal
So hardy as shall brave the passing wind
Of many winters, rearing its meek head 60
In loveliness, when he who gather'd it

Is number'd with the generations gone. 62
 Yet not to me hath God's good providence
 Given studious leisure,¹ or unbroken thought,
 Such as he owns, a meditative man,
 Who from the blush of morn to quiet eve
 Ponders, or turns the page of wisdom o'er,
 Far from the busy crowd's tumultuous din:
 From noise and wrangling far, and undisturb'd
 With Mirth's unholy shouts. For me the day 70
 Hath duties which require the vigorous hand
 Of steadfast application, but which leave
 No deep improving trace upon the mind.
 But be the day another's: let it pass!
 The night's my own! They cannot steal my night!
 When Evening lights her folding-star on high,
 I live and breathe; and in the sacred hours
 Of quiet and repose my spirit flies,
 Free as the morning, o'er the realms of space,
 And mounts the skies, and imp's her wing for heaven. 80
 Hence do I love the sober-suited maid;
 Hence Night's my friend, my mistress, and my theme,
 And she shall aid me now to magnify
 The night of ages—now when the pale ray
 Of starlight penetrates the studious gloom,
 And, at my window seated, while mankind
 Arc lock'd in sleep, I feel the freshening breeze
 Of stillness blow, while, in her saddest stole,
 Thought, like a wakeful vestal at her shrine,
 Assumes her wonted sway.

Behold the world 90
 Rests, and her tired inhabitants have paused
 From trouble and turmoil. The widow now
 Has ceased to weep, and her twin orphans lie

¹ The author was then in an attorney's office.

Lock'd in each arm, partakers of her rest. 94
 The man of sorrow has forgot his woes;
 The outcast that his head is shelterless,
 His griefs unshared. The mother tends no more
 Her daughter's dying slumbers, but, surprised
 With heaviness, and sunk upon her couch,
 Dreams of her bridals. Even the hectic, lull'd 100
 On Death's lean arm to rest, in visions wrapp'd,
 Crowning with Hope's bland wreath his shuddering nurse,
 Poor victim! smiles. Silence and deep repose
 Reign o'er the nations; and the warning voice
 Of Nature utters audibly within
 The general moral : tells us that repose,
 Deathlike as this, but of far longer span,
 Is coming on us—that the weary crowds,
 Who now enjoy a temporary calm,
 Shall soon taste lasting quiet, wrapp'd around 110
 With graveclothes ; and their aching, restless heads
 Mouldering in holes and corners unobserved,
 Till the last trump shall break their sullen sleep.
 Who needs a teacher to admonish him
 That flesh is grass—that earthly things are mist ?
 What are our joys but dreams ? and what our hopes
 But goodly shadows in the summer cloud ?
 There's not a wind that blows but bears with it
 Some rainbow promise : not a moment flies
 But puts its sickle in the fields of life, 120
 And mows its thousands, with their joys and cares.
 'Tis but as yesterday since on yon stars,
 Which now I view, the Chaldee shepherd¹ gazed,
 In his mid watch observant, and disposed
 The twinkling hosts as fancy gave them shape.

¹ Alluding to the first astronomical observations made by the Chaldean shepherds.

Yet in the interim what mighty shocks 126
 Have buffeted mankind—whole nations razed—
 Cities made desolate—the polish'd sunk
 To barbarism, and once barbaric states
 Swaying the wand of science and of arts ;
 Illustrious deeds and memorable names
 Blotted from record, and upon the tongue
 Of gray Tradition! voluble no more.

Where are the heroes of the ages past ?
 Where the brave chieftains, where the mighty ones
 Who flourish'd in the infancy of days ?
 All to the grave gone down ! On their fallen fame
 Exultant, mocking at the pride of man,
 Sits grim Forgetfulness. The warrior's arm
 Lies nerveless on the pillow of its shame ; 140
 Hush'd is his stormy voice, and quench'd the blaze
 Of his red eyeball. Yesterday his name
 Was mighty on the earth. To-day—'tis what ?
 The meteor of the night of distant years,
 That flash'd unnoticed, save by wrinkled eld,
 Musing at midnight upon prophecies,
 Who at her lonely lattice saw the gleam
 Point to the mist-poised shroud, then quietly
 Closed her pale lips, and lock'd the secret up
 Safe in the charnel's treasures.

Oh, how weak 150

Is mortal man ! how trifling—how confined
 His scope of vision ! Puff'd with confidence,
 His phrase grows big with immortality,
 And he, poor insect of a summer's day !
 Dreams of eternal honours to his name ;
 Of endless glory and perennial bays.
 He idly reasons of eternity,
 As of the train of ages, when, alas !

Ten thousand thousand of his centuries 159
 Are, in comparison, a little point
 Too trivial for account. Oh, it is strange,
 'Tis passing strange, to mark his fallacies ;
 Behold him proudly view some pompous pile,
 Whose high dome swells to emulate the skies,
 And smile, and say, My name shall live with this
 Till time shall be no more ; while at his feet,
 Yea, at his very feet, the crumbling dust
 Of the fallen fabric of the other day
 Preaches the solemn lesson. He should know
 That Time must conquer ; that the loudest blast 170
 That ever fill'd Renown's obstreperous trump
 Fades in the lapse of ages, and expires.
 Who lies inhumed in the terrific gloom
 Of the gigantic pyramid ? or who
 Rear'd its huge walls ? Oblivion laughs, and says,
 The prey is mine ! They sleep, and never more
 Their names shall strike upon the ear of man,
 Their memory burst its fetters.

Where is Rome ?

She lives but in the tale of other times ;
 Her proud pavilions are the hermit's home, 180
 And her long colonnades, her public walks,
 Now faintly echo to the pilgrim's feet,
 Who comes to muse in solitude, and trace,
 Through the rank moss reveal'd, her honour'd dust.
 But not to Rome alone has fate confined
 The doom of ruin ; cities numberless,
 Tyre, Sidon, Carthage, Babylon, and Troy,
 And rich Phœnicia—they are blotted out,
 Half razed from memory, and their very name
 And being in dispute. Has Athens fallen ? 190
 Is polish'd Greece become the savage seat

Of ignorance and sloth ? and shall we dare

192

.

And empire seeks another hemisphere.

Where now is Britain ? Where her laurell'd names,

Her palaces and halls ? Dash'd in the dust.

Some second Vandal hath reduced her pride,

And with one big recoil hath thrown her back

To primitive barbarity. Again,

Through her depopulated vales, the scream

Of bloody Superstition hollow rings,

200

And the scared native to the tempest howls

The yell of deprecation. O'er her marts,

Her crowded ports, broods silence ; and the cry

Of the low curlew, and the pensive dash

Of distant billows, breaks alone the void ;

Even as the savage sits upon the stone

That marks where stood her capitol, and hears

The bittern booming in the weeds, he shrinks

From the dismaying solitude. Her bards

Sing in a language that hath perished ;

210

And their wild harps, suspended o'er their graves,

Sigh to the desert winds a dying strain.

Meanwhile the Arts, in second infancy,

Rise in some distant clime, and then, perchance,

Some bold adventurer, fill'd with golden dreams,

Steering his bark through trackless solitudes,

Where, to his wandering thoughts, no daring prow

Hath ever plough'd before, espies the cliffs

Of fallen Albion. To the land unknown

He journeys joyful ; and perhaps descries

220

Some vestige of her ancient stateliness :

Then he, with vain conjecture, fills his mind

Of the unheard-of race, which had arrived 223
At science in that solitary nook,
Far from the civil world ; and sagely sighs,
And moralises on the state of man.

Still on its march, unnoticed and unfelt,
Moves on our being. We do live and breathe,
And we are gone. The spoiler heeds us not.
We have our spring-time and our rottenness ; 230
And as we fall another race succeeds,
To perish likewise. Meanwhile Nature smiles ;
The seasons run their round ; the sun fulfils
His annual course, and heaven and earth remain,
Still changing, yet unchanged ; still doom'd to feel
Endless mutation in perpetual rest.
Where are conceal'd the days which have elapsed ?
Hid in the mighty cavern of the past,
They rise upon us only to appal,
By indistinct and half-glimpsed images, 240
Misty, gigantic, huge, obscure, remote.

Oh, it is fearful, on the midnight couch,
When the rude rushing winds forget to rave,
And the pale moon, that through the casement high
Surveys the sleepless muser, stamps the hour
Of utter silence,—it is fearful then
To steer the mind in deadly solitude,
Up the vague stream of probability ;
To wind the mighty secrets of the past,
And turn the key of time !—Oh ! who can strive 250
To comprehend the vast, the awful truth,
Of the eternity that hath gone by,
And not recoil from the dismaying sense
Of human impotence ? The life of man
Is summ'd in birthdays and in sepulchres ;
But the Eternal God had no beginning ;

He hath no end. Time had been with him 257
 For everlasting, ere the dædal world
 Rose from the gulf in loveliness. Like him
 It knew no source, like him 'twas uncreate.
 What is it then ? The past Eternity !
 We comprehend a future without end ;
 We feel it possible that even yon sun
 May roll for ever : but we shrink amazed—
 We stand aghast, when we reflect that Time
 Knew no commencement ; that, heap age on age.
 And million upon million, without end,
 And we shall never span the void of days
 That were and are not but in retrospect.
 The Past is an unfathomable depth, 270
 Beyond the span of thought ; 'tis an elapse
 Which hath no mensuration, but hath been
 For ever and for ever.

Change of days

To us is sensible ; and each revolve
 Of the recording sun conducts us on
 Further in life, and nearer to our goal.
 Not so with Time ;—mysterious chronicler,
 He knoweth not mutation ;—centuries
 Are to his being as a day, and days 280
 As centuries. Time past, and Time to come,
 Are always equal ; when the world began
 God had existed from eternity.

.

Now look on man

Myriads of ages hence. Hath time elapsed ?
 Is he not standing in the selfsame place
 Where once we stood ? The same eternity
 Hath gone before him, and is yet to come ;
 His past is not of longer span than ours,

Though myriads of ages intervened ; 289
For who can add to what has neither sum,
Nor bound, nor source, nor estimate, nor end ?
Oh ! who can compass the Almighty mind ?
Who can unlock the secrets of the High ?
In speculations of an altitude
Sublime as this, our reason stands confess'd
Foolish, and insignificant, and mean.
Who can apply the futile argument
Of finite beings to infinity ?
He might as well compress the universe
Into the hollow compass of a gourd, 300
Scoop'd out by human art ; or bid the whale
Drink up the sea it swims in ! Can the less
Contain the greater ? or the dark obscure
Infold the glories of meridian day ?
What does philosophy impart to man
But undiscover'd wonders ? Let her soar
Even to her proudest heights—to where she caught
The soul of Newton and of Socrates,
She but extends the scope of wild amaze
And admiration. All her lessons end 310
In wider views of God's unfathom'd depths.
Lo ! the unletter'd hind, who never knew
To raise his mind excursive to the heights
Of abstract contemplation, as he sits
On the green hillock by the hedge-row side,
What time the insect swarms are murmuring,
And marks, in silent thought, the broken clouds
That fringe with loveliest hues the evening sky,
Feels in his soul the hand of Nature rouse
The thrill of gratitude, to Him who form'd 320
The goodly prospect ; he beholds the God
Throned in the west, and his reposing ear

Hears sounds angelic in the fitful breeze, 323
That floats through neighbouring copse or fairy brake,
Or lingers playful on the haunted stream.
Go with the cotter to his winter fire,
Where o'er the moors the loud blast whistles shrill,
And the hoarse ban-dog bays the icy moon ;
Mark with what awe he lists the wild uproar,
Silent, and big with thought ; and hear him bless 330
The God that rides on the tempestuous clouds,
For his snug hearth, and all his little joys :
Hear him compare his happier lot with his
Who bends his way across the wintry wolds,
A poor night-traveller, while the dismal snow
Beats in his face, and, dubious of his path,
He stops, and thinks, in every lengthening blast,
He hears some village mastiff's distant howl,
And sees, far streaming, some lone cottage light ;
Then, undeceived, upturns his streaming eyes, 340
And clasps his shivering hands ; or, overpower'd,
Sinks on the frozen ground, weigh'd down with sleep,
From which the hapless wretch shall never wake.
Thus the poor rustic warms his heart with praise
And glowing gratitude ; he turns to bless,
With honest warmth, his Maker and his God !
And shall it e'er be said, that a poor hind,
Nursed in the lap of ignorance, and bred
In want and labour, glows with nobler zeal
To laud his Maker's attributes, while he 350
Whom starry Science in her cradle rock'd,
And Castaly enchain'd with its dews,
Closes his eyes upon the holy Word,
And, blind to all but arrogance and pride,
Dares to declare his infidelity,
And openly condemn the Lord of Hosts ?

What is philosophy, if it impart
 Irreverence for the Deity, or teach
 A mortal man to set his judgment up
 Against his Maker's will ? The Polygar,
 Who kneels to sun or moon, compared with him
 Who thus perverts the talents he enjoys,
 Is the most bless'd of men ! Oh ! I would walk
 A weary journey, to the furthest verge
 Of the big world, to kiss that good man's hand,
 Who, in the blaze of wisdom and of art,
 Preserves a lowly mind ; and to his God,
 Feeling the sense of his own littleness,
 Is as a child in meek simplicity !
 What is the pomp of learning ? the parade
 Of letters and of tongues ? E'en as the mists
 Of the gray morn before the rising sun,
 That pass away and perish.

357

370

Earthly things
 Are but the transient pageants of an hour ;
 And earthly pride is like the passing flower,
 That springs to fall, and blossoms but to die.
 'Tis as the tower erected on a cloud,
 Baseless and silly as the schoolboy's dream.
 Ages and epochs that destroy our pride,
 And then record its downfall, what are they
 But the poor creatures of man's teeming brain ?
 Hath Heaven its ages ? or doth Heaven preserve
 Its stated eras ? Doth the Omnipotent
 Hear of to-morrows or of yesterdays ?
 There is to God nor future nor a past ;
 Throned in His might, all times to Him are present ;
 He hath no lapse, no past, no time to come ;
 He sees before Him one eternal now.
 Time moveth not !—our being 'tis that moves ;

380

And we, swift gliding down life's rapid stream, 390
 Dream of swift ages and revolving years,
 Ordain'd to chronicle our passing days :
 So the young sailor in the gallant bark,
 Scudding before the wind, beholds the coast
 Receding from his eyes, and thinks the while,
 Struck with amaze, that he is motionless,
 And that the land is sailing.

Such, alas !

Are the illusions of this Proteus life !
 All, all is false : through every phasis still
 'Tis shadowy and deceitful. It assumes 400
 The semblances of things and specious shapes ;
 But the lost traveller might as soon rely
 On the evasive spirit of the marsh,
 Whose lantern beams, and vanishes, and flits,
 O'er bog, and rock, and pit, and hollow way,
 As we on its appearances.

On earth

There is nor certainty nor stable hope.
 As well the weary mariner, whose bark
 Is toss'd beyond Cimmerian Bosphorus,
 Where storm and darkness hold their drear domain 410
 And sunbeams never penetrate, might trust
 To expectation of serener skies,
 And linger in the very jaws of death,
 Because some pceevish cloud were opening,
 Or the loud storm had bated in its rage ;
 As we look forward in this vale of tears
 To permanent delight—from some slight glimpse
 Of shadowy, unsubstantial happiness.

The good man's hope is laid far, far beyond
 The sway of tempests, or the furious sweep 420
 Of mortal desolation. He beholds

Unapprehensive the gigantic stride 422
 Of rampant Ruin, or the unstable waves
 Of dark Vicissitude. Even in death,—
 In that dread hour, when, with a giant pang,
 Tearing the tender fibres of the heart,
 The immortal spirit struggles to be free,
 Then, even then, that hope forsakes him not,
 For it exists beyond the narrow verge
 Of the cold sepulchre. The petty joys 430
 Of fleeting life indignantly it spurn'd,
 And rested on the bosom of its God.
 This is man's only reasonable hope ;
 And 'tis a hope which, cherish'd in the breast,
 Shall not be disappointed. Even he,
 The Holy One—Almighty—who elanced
 The rolling world along its airy way,
 Even He will deign to smile upon the good,
 And welcome him to these celestial seats,
 Where joy and gladness hold their changeless reign. 440
 Thou, proud man ! look upon yon starry vault,
 Survey the countless gems which richly stud
 The night's imperial chariot—telescopes
 Will show thee myriads more innumerable
 Than the sea-sand—each of those little lamps
 Is the great source of light, the central sun
 Round which some other mighty sisterhood
 Of planets travel, every planet stock'd
 With living beings impotent as thee.
 Now, proud man ! now, where is thy greatness fled ? 450
 What art thou in the scale of universe ?
 Less, less than nothing !—Yet of thee the God
 Who built this wondrous frame of worlds is careful,
 As well as of the mendicant who begs
 The leavings of thy table. And shalt thou

Lift up thy thankless spirit, and contemn
His heavenly providence ? Deluded fool !
Even now the thunderbolt is wing'd with death,
Even now thou totterest on the brink of hell. 456

How insignificant is mortal man,
Bound to the hasty pinions of an hour !
How poor, how trivial in the vast conceit
Of infinite duration, boundless space !
God of the universe ! Almighty One !
Thou who dost walk upon the wingèd winds,
Or with the storm, thy ruggèd charioteer,
Swift and impetuous as the northern blast,
Ridest from pole to pole ; Thou who dost hold
The forkèd lightnings in thine awful grasp,
And reignest in the earthquake, when thy wrath 470
Goes down towards erring man, I would address
To Thee my parting pæan ; for of Thee,
Great beyond comprehension, who thyself
Art Time and Space, sublime Infinitude,
Of Thee has been my song ! With awe I kneel
Trembling before the footstool of thy state,
My God ! my Father ! I will sing to thee
A hymn of laud, a solemn canticle,
Ere on the cypress wreath, which overshades
The throne of Death, I hang my mournful lyre, 480
And give its wild strings to the desert gale.
Rise, Son of Salem ! rise, and join the strain,
Sweep to accordant tones thy tuneful harp,
And, leaving vain laments, arouse thy soul
To exultation. Sing hosanna, sing,
And halleluiah, for the Lord is great,
And full of mercy ! He has thought of man ;
Yea, compass'd round with countless worlds, has thought
Of us poor worms, that batten in the dews

Of morn, and perish ere the noonday sun. 490
 Sing to the Lord, for He is merciful :
 He gave the Nubian lion but to live,
 To rage its hour, and perish ; but on man
 He lavish'd immortality and Heaven.
 The eagle falls from her aërial tower,
 And mingles with irrevocable dust ;
 But man from death springs joyful,
 Springs up to life and to eternity.
 Oh ! that, insensate of the favouring boon,
 The great exclusive privilege bestow'd 500
 On us unworthy trifles, men should dare
 To treat with slight regard the proffer'd Heaven,
 And urge the lenient, but All-Just, to swear
 In wrath, ' They shall not enter in my rest !'
 Might I address the supplicative strain
 To thy high footstool, I would pray that Thou
 Wouldst pity the deluded wanderers,
 And fold them, ere they perish, in thy flock.
 Yea, I would bid Thee pity them, through Him,
 Thy well-beloved, who, upon the cross, 510
 Bled a dread sacrifice for human sin,
 And paid, with bitter agony, the debt
 Of primitive transgression.

Oh ! I shrink,
 My very soul doth shrink, when I reflect
 That the time hastens, when, in vengeance clothed,
 Thou shalt come down to stamp the seal of fate
 On erring mortal man. Thy chariot-wheels
 Then shall rebound to earth's remotest caves,
 And stormy Ocean from his bed shall start
 At the appalling summons. Oh ! how dread, 520
 On the dark eye of miserable man,
 Chasing his sins in secrecy and gloom,

Will burst the effulgence of the opening Heaven ; 523

When to the brazen trumpet's deafening roar

Thou and thy dazzling cohorts shall descend,

Proclaiming the fulfilment of the word !

The dead shall start astonish'd from their sleep !

The sepulchres shall groan and yield their prey,

The bellowing floods shall disembody their charge

Of human victims. From the furthest nook 530

Of the wide world shall troop the risen souls—

From him whose bones are bleaching in the waste

Of polar solitudes, or him whose corpse,

Whelm'd in the loud Atlantic's vexèd tides,

Is wash'd on some Carribean prominence,

To the lone tenant of some secret cell

In the Pacific's vast realm,

Where never plummet's sound was heard to part

The wilderness of water ; they shall come

To greet the solemn advent of the Judge. 540

Thou first shall summon the elected saints

To their apportion'd Heaven ; and thy Son,

At thy right hand, shall smile with conscious joy

On all His past distresses, when for them

He bore humanity's severest pangs.

Then shalt Thou seize the avenging scimitar,

And, with a roar as loud and horrible

As the stern earthquake's monitory voice,

The wicked shall be driven to their abode,

Down the immitigable gulf, to wail 550

And gnash their teeth in endless agony.

.

Rear thou aloft thy standard !—Spirit, rear

Thy flag on high !—invincible, and throned

In unparticipated might. Behold

Earth's proudest boasts, beneath thy silent sway,

Sweep headlong to destruction, thou the while, 556
Unmoved and heedless, thou dost hear the rush
Of mighty generations, as they pass
To the broad gulf of ruin, and dost stamp
Thy signet on them, and they rise no more.
Who shall contend with Time—unvanquish'd Time,
The conqueror of conquerors, and lord
Of desolation? Lo! the shadows fly,
The hours and days, and years and centuries,
They fly, they fly, and nations rise and fall,
The young are old, the old are in their graves.
Heard'st thou that shout? It rent the vaulted skies;
It was the voice of people,—mighty crowds;
Again 'tis hush'd—Time speaks, and all is hush'd;
In the vast multitude now reigns alone 570
Unruffled solitude. They all are still;
All—yea, the whole—the incalculable mass,
Still as the ground that clasps their cold remains.

Rear thou aloft thy standard!—Spirit, rear
Thy flag on high, and glory in thy strength!
But do thou know the season yet shall come,
When from its base thine adamant throne
Shall tumble; when thine arm shall cease to strike,
Thy voice forget its petrifying power;
When saints shall shout, and Time shall be no more. 580
Yea, He doth come—the mighty Champion comes,
Whose potent spear shall give thee thy death-wound;
Shall crush the conqueror of conquerors,
And desolate stern Desolation's lord!
Lo! where He cometh! the Messiah comes!
The King! the Comforter! the Christ!—He comes
To burst the bonds of Death, and overturn
The power of Time.—Hark! the trumpet's blast
Rings o'er the heavens! They rise, the myriads rise—

Even from their graves they spring, and burst the
chains

590

Of torpor,—He has ransom'd them.

Forgotten generations live again,
Assume the bodily shapes they own'd of old,
Beyond the flood ;—the righteous of their times
Embrace and weep, they weep the tears of joy.
The sainted mother wakes, and in her lap
Clasps her dear babe, the partner of her grave,
And heritor with her of Heaven,—a flower
Wash'd by the blood of Jesus from the stain
Of native guilt, even in its early bud.

600

And, hark ! those strains, how solemnly serene
They fall as from the skies—at distance fall—
Again more loud—the halleluiahs swell ;
The newly risen catch the joyful sound ;
They glow, they burn ; and now with one accord
Bursts forth sublime from every mouth the song
Of praise to God on high, and to the Lamb
Who bled for mortals.

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Yet there is peace for man.—Yea, there is peace
Even in this noisy, this unsettled scene ;
When from the crowd, and from the city far,
Haply he may be set (in his late walk
O'ertaken with deep thought) beneath the boughs
Of honeysuckle, when the sun is gone,
And with fix'd eye, and wistful, he surveys
The solemn shadows of the Heavens sail,
And thinks the season yet shall come, when Time
Will waft him to repose, to deep repose,
Far from the unquietness of life—from noise
And tumult far—beyond the flying clouds,
Beyond the stars, and all this passing scene,

610

620

Where change shall cease, and Time shall be no
more.

722

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CHILDHOOD : A POEM.¹

PART I.

PICTURED in memory's mellowing glass, how sweet
Our infant days, our infant joys to greet !
To roam in fancy in each cherish'd scene,
The village churchyard, and the village green,
The woodland walk remote, the greenwood glade,
The mossy seat beneath the hawthorn shade,
The whitewash'd cottage, where the woodbine grew,
And all the favourite haunts our childhood knew !
How sweet, while all the evil shuns the gaze,
To view the unclouded skies of former days ! 10

Beloved age of innocence and smiles,
When each wing'd hour some new delight beguiles,
When the gay heart, to life's sweet dayspring true,
Still finds some insect pleasure to pursue,
Bless'd Childhood, hail !—Thee simply will I sing,
And from myself the artless picture bring ;
These long-lost scenes to me the past restore,
Each humble friend, each pleasure now no more,
And every stump familiar to my sight
Recalls some fond idea of delight. 20

This shrubby knoll was once my favourite seat ;
Here did I love at evening to retreat,

¹ This appears to be one of the author's earliest productions : written when about the age of fourteen.

And muse alone, till in the vault of night, 23
Hesper, aspiring, show'd his golden light.
Here once again, remote from human noise,
I sit me down to think of former joys ;
Pause on each scene, each treasured scene once more,
And once again each infant walk explore,
While, as each grove and lawn I recognise,
My melted soul suffuses in my eyes. 30

And 'oh ! thou Power, whose myriad trains resort
To distant scenes, and picture them to thought ;
Whose mirror, held unto the mourner's eye,
Flings to his soul a borrow'd gleam of joy,
Bless'd Memory ! guide, with finger nicely true,
Back to my youth my retrospective view ;
Recall with faithful vigour to my mind
Each face familiar, each relation kind ;
And all the finer traits of them afford,
Whose general outline in my heart is stored. 40

In yonder cot, along whose mouldering walls,
In many a fold the mantling woodbine falls,
The village matron kept her little school,
Gentle of heart, yet knowing well to rule ;
Staid was the dame, and modest was her mien,
Her garb was coarse, yet whole, and nicely clean ;
Her neatly border'd cap, as lily fair,
Beneath her chin was pinn'd with decent care ;
And pendent ruffles, of the whitest lawn,
Of ancient make, her elbows did adorn. 50
Faint with old age, and dim were grown her eyes,
A pair of spectacles their want supplies ;
These does she guard secure, in leathern case,
From thoughtless wights, in some unweeted place.

Here first I enter'd, though with toil and pain,
The low vestibule of learning's fane ;

Enter'd with pain, yet soon I found the way, 57
Though sometimes toilsome, many a sweet display.
Much did I grieve on that ill-fated morn
When I was first to school reluctant borne ;
Severe I thought the dame, though oft she tried
To soothe my swelling spirits when I sigh'd ;
And oft, when harshly she reprov'd, I wept,
To my lone corner broken-hearted crept,
And thought of tender home, where anger never
kept.

But soon inured to alphabetic toils,
Alert I met the dame with jocund smiles ;
First at the form, my task for ever true,
A little favourite rapidly I grew ;
And oft she stroked my head with fond delight, 70
Held me a pattern to the dunce's sight ;
And as she gave my diligence its praise,
Talk'd of the honours of my future days.

Oh ! had the venerable matron thought
Of all the ills by talent often brought ;
Could she have seen me when revolving years
Had brought me deeper in the vale of tears,
Then had she wept, and wish'd my wayward fate
Had been a lowlier, an unletter'd state ;
Wish'd that, remote from worldly woes and strife, 80
Unknown, unheard, I might have pass'd through life.

Where in the busy scene, by peace unbless'd,
Shall the poor wanderer find a place of rest ?
A lonely mariner on the stormy main,
Without a hope the calms of peace to gain ;
Long toss'd by tempests o'er the world's wide shore,
When shall his spirit rest to toil no more ?
Not till the light foam of the sea shall lave
The sandy surface of his unwept grave.

Childhood ! to thee I turn, from life's alarms, 90
Serenest season of perpetual calms—
Turn with delight, and bid the passions cease,
And joy to think with thee I tasted peace.
Sweet reign of innocence, when no crime defiles,
But each new object brings attendant smiles ;
When future evils never haunt the sight,
But all is pregnant with unmix'd delight ;
To thee I turn from riot and from noise,
Turn to partake of more congenial joys.

'Neath yonder elm, that stands upon the moor, 100
When the clock spoke the hour of labour o'er,
What clamorous throngs, what happy groups were seen,
In various postures scattering o'er the green !
Some shoot the marble, others join the chase
Of self-made stag, or run the emulous race ;
While others, seated on the dappled grass,
With doleful tales the light-wing'd minutes pass.
Well I remember how, with gesture starch'd,
A band of soldiers oft with pride we march'd ;
For banners, to a tall ash we did bind 110
Our handkerchiefs, flapping to the whistling wind ;
And for our warlike arms we sought the mead,
And guns and spears we made of brittle reed ;
Then, in uncouth array, our feats to crown,
We storm'd some ruin'd pigstye for a town.

Pleased with our gay disports, the dame was wont
To set her wheel before the cottage front,
And o'er her spectacles would often peer,
To view our gambols, and our boyish geer.
Still as she look'd, her wheel kept turning round, 120
With its beloved monotony of sound.
When tired with play, we'd set us by her side,
(For out of school she never knew to chide),

And wonder at her skill—well known to fame— 124
For who could match in spinning with the dame ?
Her sheets, her linen, which she show'd with pride
To strangers, still her thriftness testified ;
Though we poor wights did wonder much, in troth,
How 'twas her spinning manufactured cloth.

Oft would we leave, though well beloved, our play,
To chat at home the vacant hour away. 131
Many's the time I've scamper'd down the glade,
To ask the promised ditty from the maid,
Which well she loved, as well she knew to sing,
While we around her form'd a little ring :
She told of innocence foredoom'd to bleed,
Of wicked guardians bent on bloody deed,
Or little children murder'd as they slept ;
While at each pause we wrung our hands and wept.
Sad was such tale, and wonder much did we 140
Such hearts of stone there in the world could be.
Poor simple wights, ah ! little did we ween
The ills that wait on man in life's sad scene !
Ah, little thought that we ourselves should know
This world's a world of weeping and of woe !

Beloved moment ! then 'twas first I caught
The first foundation of romantic thought !
Then first I shed bold Fançy's thrilling tear
Then first that poesy charm'd mine infant ear.
Soon stored with much of legendary lore, 150
The sports of childhood charm'd my soul no more.
Far from the scene of gaiety and noise,
Far, far from turbulent and empty joys,
I hied me to the thick o'erarching shade,
And there, on mossy carpet, listless laid,
While at my feet the rippling runnel ran,
The days of wild romance antique I'd scan ;

Soar on the wings of fancy through the air, 158
 To realms of light, and pierce the radiance there.

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PART II.

There are who think that Childhood does not share
 With Age the cup, the bitter cup, of care :
 Alas ! they know not this unhappy truth,
 That every age and rank is born to ruth.

From the first dawn of reason in the mind,
 Man is foredoom'd the thorns of grief to find ;
 At every step has further cause to know
 The draught of pleasure still is dash'd with woe.

Yet in the youthful breast, for ever caught
 With some new object for romantic thought, 10
 The impression of the moment quickly flies,
 And with the morrow every sorrow dies.

How different manhood !—then does thought's control
 Sink every pang still deeper in the soul ;
 Then keen affliction's sad unceasing smart
 Becomes a painful resident in the heart ;
 And care, whom not the bravest can outbrave,
 Pursues its feeble victim to the grave.
 Then, as each long known friend is summon'd hence,
 We feel a void no joy can recompense, 20
 And as we weep o'er every new-made tomb,
 Wish that ourselves the next may meet our doom.

Yes ! Childhood, thee no rankling woes pursue,
 No forms of future ill salute thy view,
 No pangs repentant bid thee wake to weep,
 But halcyon peace protects thy downy sleep,
 And sanguine Hope, through every storm of life,
 Shoots her bright beams, and calms the internal strife.

Yet e'en round childhood's heart, a thoughtless shrine, 29
Affection's little thread will ever twine ;
And though but frail may seem each tender tie,
The soul foregoes them but with many a sigh.
Thus, when the long expected moment came,
When forced to leave the gentle-hearted dame,
Reluctant throbblings rose within my breast,
And a still tear my silent grief express'd.

When to the public school compell'd to go,
What novel scenes did on my senses flow !
There in each breast each active power dilates,
Which 'broils whole nations, and convulses states ; 40
There reigns, by turns alternate, love and hate,
Ambition burns, and factious rebels prate ;
And in a smaller range, a smaller sphere,
The dark deformities of man appear.
Yet there the gentler virtues kindred claim,
There Friendship lights her pure untainted flame,
There mild Benevolence delights to dwell,
And sweet Contentment rests without her cell ;
And there, 'mid many a stormy soul, we find
The good of heart, the intelligent of mind. 50

'Twas there, O George ! with thee I learn'd to join
In Friendship's bands, in amity divine.
Oh, mournful thought ! where is thy spirit now ?
As here I sit on favourite Logar's brow,
And trace below each well-remember'd glade,
Where, arm in arm, erewhile with thee I stray'd.
Where art thou laid—on what untrodden shore,
Where nought is heard save ocean's sullen roar ?
Dost thou in lowly, unlamented state,
At last repose from all the storms of fate ? 60
Methinks I see thee struggling with the wave,
Without one aiding hand stretch'd out to save ;

See thee convulsed, thy looks to heaven bend, 63
And send thy parting sigh unto thy friend :
Or where immeasurable wilds dismay,
Forlorn and sad thou bend'st thy weary way,
While sorrow and disease, with anguish rife,
Consume apace the ebbing springs of life ;
Again I see, his door against thee shut,
The unfeeling native turn thee from his hut ; 70
I see thee, spent with toil and worn with grief,
Sit on the grass, and wish the long'd relief ;
Then lie thee down, the stormy struggle o'er,
Think on thy native land—and rise no more !

Oh ! that thou couldst, from thine august abode,
Survey thy friend in life's dismaying road,
That thou couldst see him, at this moment here,
Embalm thy memory with a pious tear,
And hover o'er him as he gazes round,
Where all the scenes of infant joys surround. 80

Yes ! yes ! his spirit's near ! The whispering breeze
Conveys his voice sad sighing on the trees ;
And lo ! his form transparent I perceive,
Borne on the gray mist of the sullen eve :
He hovers near, clad in the night's dim robe,
While deathly silence reigns upon the globe.

Yet ah ! whence comes this visionary scene ?
'Tis Fancy's wild ærial dream I ween :
By her inspired, when reason takes its flight,
What fond illusions beam upon the sight ! 90
She waves her hand, and lo ! what forms appear !
What magic sounds salute the wondering ear !
Once more o'er distant regions do we tread,
And the cold grave yields up its cherish'd dead ;
While, present sorrows banish'd far away,
Unclouded azure gilds the placid day,

Or, in the future's cloud-encircled face, 97
Fair scenes of bliss to come we fondly trace,
And draw minutely every little wile,
Which shall the feathery hours of time beguile.

So when, forlorn and lonesome, at her gate
The royal Mary solitary sate,
And view'd the moonbeam trembling on the wave,
And heard the hollow surge her prison lave,
Towards France's distant coast she bent her sight,
For there her soul had wing'd its longing flight ;
There did she form full many a scheme of joy,
Visions of bliss unclouded with alloy,
Which bright through Hope's deceitful optics beam'd,
And all became the surety which it seem'd ; 116
She wept, yet felt, while all within was calm,
In every tear a melancholy charm.

To yonder hill, whose sides, deform'd and steep,
Just yield a scanty sustenance to the sheep,
With thee, my friend, I oftentimes have sped,
To see the sun rise from his healthy bed ;
To watch the aspect of the summer morn,
Smiling upon the golden fields of corn,
And taste, delighted, of superior joys,
Beheld through sympathy's enchanted eyes : 120
With silent admiration oft we view'd
The myriad hues o'er heaven's blue concave strew'd ;
The fleecy clouds, of every tint and shade,
Round which the silvery sunbeam glancing play'd,
And the round orb itself, in azure throne,
Just peeping o'er the blue hill's ridgy zone ;
We mark'd, delighted, how with aspect gay
Reviving Nature hail'd returning day ;
Mark'd how the flowerets rear'd their drooping heads,
And the wild lambkins bounded o'er the meads, 130

While from each tree, in tones of sweet delight, 131
The birds sung pæans to the source of light :
Oft have we watch'd the speckled lark arise,
Leave his grass bed, and soar to kindred skies,
And rise, and rise, till the pain'd sight no more
Could trace him in his high ærial tour ;
Though on the ear, at intervals, his song
Came wafted slow the wavy breeze along ;
And we have thought how happy were our lot,
Bless'd with some sweet, some solitary cot, 140
Where, from the peep of day, till russet eve
Began in every dell her forms to weave,
We might pursue our sports from day to day,
And in each other's arms wear life away.

At sultry noon too, when our toils were done,
We to the gloomy glen were wont to run ;
There on the turf we lay, while at our feet
The cooling rivulet rippled softly sweet ;
And mused on holy theme, and ancient lore,
Of deeds, and days, and heroes now no more ; 150
Heard, as his solemn harp Isaiah swept,
Sung woe unto the wicked land—and wept ;
Or, fancy-led, saw Jeremiah mourn
In solemn sorrow o'er Judea's urn.
Then to another shore perhaps would rove,
With Plato talk in his Ilyssian grove ;
Or, wandering where the Thespian palace rose,
Weep once again o'er fair Jocasta's woes.

Sweet then to us was that romantic band,
The ancient legends of our native land— 160
Chivalric Britomart, and Una fair,
And courteous Constance, doom'd to dark despair,
By turns our thoughts engaged ; and oft we talk'd
Of times when monarch Superstition stalk'd,

And when the blood-fraught galliots of Rome 165
 Brought the grand Druid fabric to its doom :
 While, where the wood-hung Meinai's waters flow,
 The hoary harpers pour'd the strain of woe.

While thus employ'd, to us how sad the bell
 Which summon'd us to school! 'Twas Fancy's
 knell, 170

And, sadly sounding on the sullen ear,
 It spoke of study pale, and chilling fear.
 Yet even then, (for oh ! what chains can bind,
 What powers control, the energies of mind !)
 E'en then we soar'd to many a height sublime,
 And many a day-dream charm'd the lazy time.

At evening too, how pleasing was our walk,
 Endear'd by Friendship's unrestrain'd talk,
 When to the upland heights we bent our way,
 To view the last beam of departing day ; 180
 How calm was all around ! no playful breeze
 Sigh'd 'mid the wavy foliage of the trees,
 But all was still, save when, with drowsy song,
 The gray-fly wound his sullen horn along ;
 And save when, heard in soft, yet merry glee,
 The distant church-bells' mellow harmony ;
 The silver mirror of the lucid brook,
 That 'mid the tufted broom its still course took ;
 The rugged arch, that clasp'd its silent tides,
 With moss and rank weeds hanging down its sides ; 190
 The craggy rock, that jutt'd on the sight ;
 The shrieking bat, that took its heavy flight ;
 All, all was pregnant with divine delight.
 We loved to watch the swallow swimming high,
 In the bright azure of the vaulted sky ;
 Or gaze upon the clouds, whose colour'd pride
 Was scatter'd thinly o'er the welkin wide,

And tinged with such variety of shade, 198
To the charm'd soul sublimest thoughts convey'd.
In these what forms romantic did we trace,
While Fancy led us o'er the realms of space!
Now we espied the Thunderer in his car,
Leading the embattled seraphim to war,
Then stately towers descried, sublimely high,
In Gothic grandeur frowning on the sky—
Or saw, wide stretching o'er the azure height,
A ridge of glaciers in mural white,
Hugely terrific.—But those times are o'er,
And the fond scene can charm mine eyes no more ;
For thou art gone, and I am left below, 210
Alone to struggle through this world of woe.

The scene is o'er—still seasons onward roll,
And each revolve conducts me toward the goal ;
Yet all is blank, without one soft relief,
One endless continuity of grief ;
And the tired soul, now led to thoughts sublime,
Looks but for rest beyond the bounds of time.

Toil on, toil on, ye busy crowds, that pant
For hoards of wealth which ye will never want :
And, lost to all but gain, with ease resign 220
The calms of peace and happiness divine !
Far other cares be mine—men little crave
In this short journey to the silent grave ;
And the poor peasant, bless'd with peace and health,
I envy more than Cræsus with his wealth.
Yet grieve not I, that fate did not decree
Paternal acres to await on me ;
She gave me more—she placed within my breast
A heart with little pleased, with little bless'd :
I look around me, where, on every side, 230
Extensive manors spread in wealthy pride ;

And could my sight be borne to either zone, 232
I should not find one foot of land my own.

But whither do I wander ? shall the Muse,
For golden baits, her simple theme refuse ?
Oh, no ! but while the weary spirit greets
The fading scenes of childhood's far-gone sweets,
It catches all the infant's wandering tongue,
And prattles on in desultory song.
That song must close ; the gloomy mists of night 240
Obsure the pale stars' visionary light,
And ebon darkness, clad in vapoury wet,
Steals on the welkin in primeval jet.

The song must close. Once more my adverse lot
Leads me reluctant from this cherish'd spot :
Again compels to plunge in busy life,
And brave the hateful turbulence of strife.

Scenes of my youth ! ere my unwilling feet
Are turn'd for ever from this loved retreat,
Ere on these fields, with plenty cover'd o'er, 250
My eyes are closed to ope on them no more,
Let me ejaculate, to feeling due,
One long, one last affectionate adieu.
Grant that, if ever Providence should please
To give me an old age of peace and ease,
Grant that, in these sequester'd shades, my days
May wear away in gradual decays :
And oh ! ye spirits, who unbodied play,
Unseen upon the pinions of the day,
Kind genii of my native fields benign, 260
Who were

THE CHRISTIAD : A DIVINE POEM.

BOOK I.

- 1 I SING the Cross!—Ye white-robed angel choirs,
Who know the chords of harmony to sweep,
Ye who o'er holy David's varying wires
Were wont, of old, your hovering watch to keep,
Oh, now descend! and with your harpings deep,
Pouring sublime the full symphonious stream
Of music, such as soothes the saint's last sleep,
Awake my slumbering spirit from its dream,
And teach me how to exalt the high mysterious theme.
- 2 Mourn! Salem, mourn! low lies thine humbled state,
Thy glittering fanes are levell'd with the ground!
Fallen is thy pride! Thine halls are desolate!
Where erst was heard the timbrel's sprightly sound,
And frolic pleasures tripp'd the nightly round,
There breeds the wild fox lonely, and aghast
Stands the mute pilgrim at the void profound,
Unbroke by noise, save when the hurrying blast
Sighs, like a spirit, deep along the cheerless waste.
- 3 It is for this, proud Solyma! thy towers
Lie crumbling in the dust; for this forlorn
Thy genius wails along thy desert bowers,
While stern Destruction laughs, as if in scorn,
That thou didst dare insult God's eldest born;
And, with most bitter persecuting ire,
Pursued his footsteps till the last day-dawn
Rose on his fortunes, and thou saw'st the fire
That came to light the world, in one great flash expire.

4 Oh ! for a pencil dipp'd in living light,
 To paint the agonies that Jesus bore !
 Oh ! for the long lost harp of Jesse's might,
 To hymn the Saviour's praise from shore to shore ;
 While seraph hosts the lofty pæan pour,
 And Heaven enraptured lists the loud acclaim !
 May a frail mortal dare the theme explore ?
 May he to human ears his weak song frame ?
 Oh ! may he dare to sing Messiah's glorious name ?

5 Spirits of pity ! mild Crusaders, come !
 Buoyant on clouds around your minstrel float,
 And give him eloquence who else were dumb,
 And raise to feeling and to fire his note !
 And thou, Urania ! who dost still devote
 Thy nights and days to God's eternal shrine,
 Whose mild eyes 'lumined what Isaiah wrote,
 Throw o'er thy Bard that solemn stole of thine,
 And clothe him for the fight with energy divine.

6 When from the temple's lofty summit prone,
 Satan, o'ercome, fell down ; and 'thronèd there,
 The Son of God confess'd in splendour shone :
 Swift as the glancing sunbeam cuts the air,
 Mad with defeat, and yelling his despair,

 Fled the stern king of Hell—and with the glare
 Of gliding meteors, ominous and red,
 Shot athwart the clouds that gather'd round his head.

7 Right o'er the Euxine, and that gulf which late
 The rude Massagetæ adored, he bent
 His northering course, while round, in dusky state,
 The assembling fiends their summon'd troops
 augment ;

Clothed in dark mists, upon their way they went,
While, as they pass'd to regions more severe,
The Lapland sorcerer swell'd with loud lament
The solitary gale ; and, fill'd with fear,
The howling dogs bespoke unholy spirits near.

8 Where the North Pole, in moody solitude,
Spreads her huge tracks and frozen wastes around,
There ice-rocks piled aloft, in order rude,
Form a gigantic hall, where never sound
Startled dull Silence' ear, save when profound
The smoke-frost mutter'd : there drear Cold for aye
Thrones him, and, fix'd on his primeval mound,
Ruin, the giant, sits ; while stern Dismay
Stalks like some woe-struck man along the desert way.

9 In that drear spot, grim Desolation's lair,
No sweet remain of life encheers the sight ;
The dancing heart's blood in an instant there
Would freeze to marble. Mingling day and night
(Sweet interchange, which makes our labours light)
Are there unknown ; while in the summer skies
The sun rolls ceaseless round his heavenly height,
Nor ever sets till from the scene he flies,
And leaves the long bleak night of half the year to rise.

10 'Twas there, yet shuddering from the burning lake,
Satan had fix'd their next consistory,
When parting last he fondly hoped to shake
Messiah's constancy, and thus to free
The powers of darkness from the dread decree
Of bondage brought by him, and circumvent
The unerring ways of Him whose eye can see
The womb of Time, and, in its embryo pent,
Discern the colours clear of every dark event.

- 11 Here the stern monarch stay'd his rapid flight,
And his thick hosts, as with a jetty pall,
Hovering obscured the north star's peaceful light,
Waiting on wing their haughty chieftain's call.
He, meanwhile, downward, with a sullen fall,
Dropp'd on the echoing ice. Instant the sound
Of their broad vans was hush'd, and o'er the hall,
Vast and obscure, the gloomy cohorts bound,
Till, wedged in ranks, the seat of Satan they surround.
- 12 High on the solium of the solid wave,
Prank'd with rude shapes by the fantastic frost
He stood in silence ;—now keen thoughts engrave
Dark figures on his front ; and, tempest-toss'd,
He fears to say that every hope is lost.
Meanwhile the multitude as death are mute ;
So, ere the tempest on Malacca's coast,
Sweet Quiet, gently touching her soft lute,
Sings to the whispering waves the prelude to dispute.
- 13 At length collected, o'er the dark Divan
The arch-fiend glanced, as by the Boreal blaze
Their downcast brows were seen, and thus began
His fierce harangue :—‘ Spirits ! our better days
Are now elapsed ; Moloch and Belial's praise
Shall sound no more in groves by myriads trod.
Lo ! the light breaks ; the astonish'd nations gaze !
For us is lifted high the avenging rod !
For, Spirits ! this is He,—this is the Son of God !
- 14 ‘ What then !—shall Satan's spirit crouch to fear ?
Shall he who shook the pillars of God's reign
Drop from his unnerved arm the hostile spear ?
Madness ! The very thought would make me fain

To tear the spanglets from yon gaudy plain,
And hurl them at their Maker!—Fix'd as Fate
I am his foe!—Yea, though his pride should deign
To soothe mine ire with half his regal state,
Still would I burn with fix'd, unalterable hate.

- 15 'Now hear the issue of my cursed emprise,
When from our last sad synod I took flight,
Buoy'd with false hopes, in some deep-laid disguise,
To tempt this vaunted Holy One to write
His own self-condemnation : In the plight
Of aged man in the lone wilderness,
Gathering a few stray sticks, I met his sight :
And, leaning on my staff, seem'd much to guess
What cause could mortal bring to that forlorn recess.

- 16 'Then thus in homely guise I featly framed
My lowly speech :—"Good sir, what leads this way
Your wandering steps? must hapless chance be blame
That you so far from haunt of mortals stray?
Here have I dwelt for many a lingering day,
Nor trace of man have seen! but how! methought
Thou wert the youth on whom God's holy ray
I saw descend in Jordan, when John taught
That He to fallen man the saving promise brought."

- 17 "I am that man," said Jesus, "I am He.
But truce to questions. Canst thou point my feet
To some low hut, if haply such there be
In this wild labyrinth, where I may meet
With homely greeting, and may sit and eat;
For forty days I have tarried fasting here,
Hid in the dark glens of this lone retreat,
And now I hunger; and my fainting ear
Longs much to greet the sound of fountains gushing near.

- 18 ‘Then thus I answer’d wily :—“ If, indeed,
Son of our God thou be’st, what need to seek
For food from men ? Lo ! on these flint stones feed,
Bid them be bread ! Open thy lips and speak,
And living rills from yon parch’d rock will break.”
Instant as I had spoke, His piercing eye
Fix’d on my face ; the blood forsook my cheek,
I could not bear His gaze ;—my mask slipp’d by ;
I would have shunn’d His look, but had not power to fly.
- 19 ‘Then He rebuked me with the holy Word—
Accursed sounds ; but now my native pride
Return’d, and by no foolish qualm deterr’d,
I bore Him from the mountain’s woody side
Up to the summit, where extending wide
Kingdoms and cities, palaces and fanes,
Bright sparkling in the sunbeams, were descried,
And in gay dance, amid luxuriant plains,
Tripp’d to the jocund reed the emasculated swains.
- 20 “Behold,” I cried, “these glories ! scenes divine !
Thou whose sad prime in pining want decays :
And these, oh rapture ! these shall all be thine,
If Thou wilt give to me, not God, the praise.
Hath He not given to indigence thy days ?
Is not thy portion peril here and pain ?
Oh ! leave His temples, shun His wounding ways !
Seize the tiara ! these mean weeds disdain,
Kneel, kneel, thou man of woe ! and peace and splendour gain.”
- 21 “Is it not written,” sternly he replied,
“Tempt not the Lord thy God ?” Frowning He spake,
And instant sounds, as of the ocean tide,
Rose, and the whirlwind from its prison brake,

And caught me up aloft, till in one flake
The sidelong volley met my swift career,
And smote me earthward. Jove himself might quake
At such a fall ; my sinews crack'd, and near,
Obscure and dizzy sounds seem'd ringing in mine ear.

22 'Senseless and stunn'd I lay ; till, casting round
My half unconscious gaze, I saw the foe
Borne on a car of roses to the ground,
By volant angels ; and as, sailing slow,
He sunk the hoary battlement below,
While on the tall spire slept the slant sunbeam,
Sweet on the enamour'd zephyr was the flow
Of heavenly instruments. Such strains oft seem,
On star-light hill, to soothe the Syrian shepherd's dream.

23 'I saw blaspheming. Hate renew'd my strength ;
I smote the ether with my iron wing,
And left the accurs'd scene. Arrived at length
In these drear halls, to ye, my peers ! I bring
The tidings of defeat. Hell's haughty king
Thrice vanquish'd, baffled, smitten, and dismay'd !
Oh shame ! Is this the hero who could fling
Defiance at his Maker, while array'd,
High o'er the walls of light, rebellion's banners play'd !

24 'Yet shall not Heaven's bland minions triumph long ;
Hell yet shall have revenge. Oh glorious sight !
Prophetic visions on my fancy throng,
I see wild Agony's lean finger write
Sad figures on His forehead !—Keenly bright
Revenge's flambeau burns ! Now in His eyes
Stand the hot tears, immantled in the night !
Lo ! He retires to mourn ! I hear His cries !
He faints—He falls—and lo !—'tis true, ye powers, He dies !'

- 25 Thus spake the chieftain, and as if he view'd
 The scene he pictured, with his foot advanced
 And chest inflated, motionless he stood,
 While under his uplifted shield he glanced,
 With straining eyeball fix'd, like one entranced,
 On viewless air : thither the dark platoon
 Gazed wondering, nothing seen, save when there danced
 The northern flash, or fiend late fled from noon,
 Darken'd the disk of the descending moon.
- 26 Silence crept stilly through the ranks. The breeze
 Spake most distinctly. As the sailor stands,
 When all the midnight gasping from the seas
 Break boding sobs, and to his sight expands
 High on the shrouds the spirit that commands
 The ocean-farer's life ; so stiff, so sear
 Stood each dark power ; while through their
 numerous bands
 Beat not one heart, and mingling hope and fear
 Now told them all was lost, now bade revenge appear.
- 27 One there was there, whose loud defying tongue
 Nor hope nor fear had silenced, but the swell
 Of over-boiling malice. Utterance long
 His passion mock'd, and long he strove to tell
 His labouring ire ; still syllable none fell
 From his pale quivering lip, but died away
 For very fury ; from each hollow cell
 Half sprang his eyes, that cast a flamy ray,
 And
- 28 'This comes,' at length burst from the furious chief,
 'This comes of distant counsels ! Here behold
 The fruits of wily cunning ! the relief
 Which coward policy would fain unfold,

To soothe the powers that warr'd with Heaven of old,
 O wise ! O potent ! O sagacious snare !
 And lo ! our prince, the mighty and the bold,
 There stands he, spell-struck, gaping at the air,
 While Heaven subverts his reign, and plants her standard
 there.'

29 Here, as recover'd, Satan fix'd his eye
 Full on the speaker ; dark it was and stern ;
 He wrapp'd his black vest round him gloomily,
 And stood like one whom weightiest thoughts concern ;
 Him Moloch mark'd, and strove again to turn
 His soul to rage. 'Behold, behold,' he cried,
 'The lord of hell, who made these legions spurn
 Almighty rule, behold he lays aside
 The spear of just revenge, and shrinks, by man defied !'

30 Thus ended Moloch, and his burning tongue
 Hung quivering, as if [mad] to quench its heat
 In slaughter. So, his native wilds among,
 The famish'd tiger pants, when, near his seat,
 Press'd on the sands, he marks the traveller's feet.
 Instant low murmurs rose, and many a sword
 Had from its scabbard sprung ; but toward the seat
 Of the arch-fiend all turn'd with one accord,
 As loud he thus harangued the sanguinary horde.

.
 'Ye powers of Hell, I am no coward. I proved this
 of old : Who led your forces against the armies of
 Jehovah ? Who coped with Ithuriel and the thunders
 of the Almighty ? Who, when stunned and confused
 ye lay on the burning lake, who first awoke, and col-
 lected your scattered powers ? Lastly, who led you
 across the unfathomable abyss to this delightful world,

and established that reign here which now totters to its base? How, therefore, dares yon treacherous fiend to cast a stain on Satan's bravery?—he who preys only on the defenceless—who sucks the blood of infants, and delights only in acts of ignoble cruelty and unequal contention. Away with the boaster who never joins in action, but, like a cormorant, hovers over the field, to feed upon the wounded, and overwhelm the dying! True bravery is as remote from rashness as from hesitation; let us counsel coolly, but let us execute our counselled purposes determinately. In power we have learned, by that experiment which lost us Heaven, that we are inferior to the Thunder-bearer:—In subtlety, in subtlety alone we are his equals. Open war is impossible.

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 31 'Thus we shall pierce our conqueror through the race
 Which as himself he loves; thus if we fall,
 We fall not with the anguish, the disgrace,
 Of falling unrevenged. The stirring call
 Of vengeance rings within me! Warriors all,
 The word is vengeance, and the spur despair!
 Away with coward wiles! Death's coal-black pall
 Be now our standard! Be our torch the glare
 Of cities fired! our fifes, the shrieks that fill the air!'

32 Him answering rose Mecashpim, who of old,
 Far in the silence of Chaldea's groves,
 Was worshipp'd, God of Fire, with charms untold
 And mystery. His wandering spirit roves,
 Now vainly searching for the flame it loves;
 And sits and mourns like some white-robed sire,
 Where stood his temple, and where fragrant cloves
 And cinnamon upheap'd the sacred pyre,
 And nightly Magi watch'd the everlasting fire.

- 33 He waved his robe of flame, he cross'd his breast,
 And, sighing, his papyrus scarf survey'd,
 Woven with dark characters, then thus address'd
 The troubled council.

.

- 34 Thus far have I pursued my solemn theme
 With self-rewarding toil, thus far have sung
 Of godlike deeds, far loftier than beseem
 The lyre which I in early days have strung :
 And now my spirit's faint, and I have hung
 The shell, that solaced me in saddest hour,
 On the dark cypress ! and the strings which rung
 With Jesus' praise, their harpings now are o'er,
 Or, when the breeze comes by, moan and are heard no more.

- 35 And must the harp of Judah sleep again ?
 Shall I no more reanimate the lay ?
 Oh ! thou who visitest the sons of men,
 Thou who dost listen when the humble pray,
 One little space prolong my mournful day !
 One little lapse suspend thy last decree !
 I am a youthful traveller in the way,
 And this slight boon would consecrate to thee,
 Ere I with Death shake hands, and smile that I am free.

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LINES WRITTEN ON A SURVEY OF THE
HEAVENS,

IN THE MORNING BEFORE DAYBREAK.

YE many twinkling stars, who yet do hold
Your brilliant places in the sable vault
Of night's dominions! Planets, and central orbs
Of other systems, big as the burning sun
Which lights this nether globe, yet to our eye
Small as the glow-worm's lamp! To you I raise
My lowly orisons, while, all bewilder'd,
My vision strays o'er your ethereal hosts;
Too vast, too boundless for our narrow mind,
Warp'd with low prejudices, to unfold, 10
And sagely comprehend. Thence higher soaring,
Through ye I raise my solemn thoughts to Him,
The mighty Founder of this wondrous maze,
The great Creator! Him, who now sublime,
Wrapp'd in the solitary amplitude
Of boundless space, above the rolling spheres
Sits on his silent throne, and meditates!

The angelic hosts, in their inferior Heaven,
Hymn to the golden harps his praise sublime,
Repeating loud, 'The Lord our God is great,' 20
In varied harmonies. The glorious sounds
Roll o'er the air serene; the Æolian spheres,
Harping along their viewless boundaries,
Catch the full note, and cry, 'The Lord is great,'
Responding to the Seraphim. O'er all
From orb to orb, to the remotest verge
Of the created world, the sound is borne,
Till the whole universe is full of Him.

Oh ! 'tis this heavenly harmony which now 29
In fancy strikes upon my listening ear,
And thrills my inmost soul. It bids me smile
On the vain world, and all its bustling cares,
And gives a shadowy glimpse of future bliss.

Oh ! what is man, when at ambition's height !
What even are kings, when balanced in the scale
Of these stupendous worlds ! Almighty God !
Thou, the dread author of these wondrous works !
Say, canst thou cast on me, poor passing worm,
One look of kind benevolence ? Thou canst :
For Thou art full of universal love, 40
And in Thy boundless goodness wilt impart
Thy beams as well to me as to the proud,
The pageant insects of a glittering hour.

Oh ! when reflecting on these truths sublime,
How insignificant do all the joys,
The gauds, and honours of the world appear !
How vain ambition ! Why has my wakeful lamp
Outwatch'd the slow-paced night ? Why on the page—
The schoolman's labour'd page—have I employ'd
The hours devoted by the world to rest, 50
And needful to recruit exhausted nature ?
Say, can the voice of narrow Fame repay
The loss of health ? or can the hope of glory
Lend a new throb into my languid heart,
Cool, even now, my feverish aching brow,
Relume the fires of this deep sunken eye,
Or paint new colours on this pallid cheek ?

Say, foolish one ! can that unbodied fame,
For which thou barterest health and happiness,
Say, can it soothe the slumbers of the grave ; 60
Give a new zest to bliss, or chase the pangs
Of everlasting punishment condign ?

Alas ! how vain are mortal man's desires !
How fruitless his pursuits ! Eternal God !
Guide Thou my footsteps in the way of truth ;
And oh ! assist me so to live on earth
That I may die in peace, and claim a place
In thy high dwelling. All but this is folly,
The vain illusions of deceitful life.

63

LINES

SUPPOSED TO BE SPOKEN BY A LOVER AT THE GRAVE OF
HIS MISTRESS.

OCCASIONED BY A SITUATION IN A ROMANCE.

MARY, the moon is sleeping on thy grave,
And on the turf thy lover sad is kneeling,
The big tear in his eye. Mary, awake,
From thy dark house arise, and bless his sight,
On the pale moonbeam gliding. Soft, and low,
Pour on the silver ear of night thy tale,
Thy whisper'd tale of comfort and of love,
To soothe thy Edward's lorn, distracted soul,
And cheer his breaking heart. Come, as thou didst,
When o'er the barren moors the night wind howl'd, 10
And the deep thunders shook the ebon throne
Of the startled night ! Oh ! then, as lone reclining
I listen'd sadly to the dismal storm,
Thou on the lambent lightnings wild careering
Didst strike my moody eye ;—dead pale thou wert,
Yet passing lovely. Thou didst smile upon me,
And oh ! thy voice it rose so musical,
Betwixt the hollow pauses of the storm,

That at the sound the winds forgot to rave, 19
And the stern demon of the tempest, charm'd,
Sunk on his rocking throne to still repose,
Lock'd in the arms of silence.

Spirit of her!

My only love! Oh! now again arise,
And let once more thine æry accents fall
Soft on my listening ear. The night is calm,
The gloomy willows wave in sinking cadence
With the stream that sweeps below. Divinely swelling
On the still air, the distant waterfall
Mingles its melody: and, high above,
The pensive empress of the solemn night, 30
Fitful, emerging from the rapid clouds,
Shows her chaste face in the meridian sky.
No wicked elves upon the Warlock-knoll
Dare now assemble at their mystic revels.
It is a night when, from their primrose beds,
The gentle ghosts of injured innocents
Are known to rise and wander on the breeze,
Or take their stand by the oppressor's couch,
And strike grim terror to his guilty soul.
The spirit of my love might now awake 40
And hold its custom'd converse.

Mary, lo!

Thy Edward kneels upon thy verdant grave,
And calls upon thy name. The breeze that blows
On his wan cheek will soon sweep over him
In solemn music a funereal dirge,
Wild and most sorrowful. His cheek is pale,
The worm that prey'd upon thy youthful bloom
It canker'd green on his. Now lost he stands,
The ghost of what he was, and the cold dew,
Which bathes his aching temples, gives sure omen 50

Of speedy dissolution. Mary, soon 51
 Thy love will lay his pallid cheek to thine,
 And sweetly will he sleep with thee in death.

MY STUDY.

A LETTER IN HUDIBRASTIC VERSE.

You bid me, Ned, describe the place
 Where I, one of the rhyming race,
 Pursue my studies *con amore*,
 And wanton with the Muse in glory.
 Well, figure to your senses straight,
 Upon the house's topmost height,
 A closet just six feet by four,
 With whitewash'd walls and plaster floor.
 So noble large, 'tis scarcely able
 To admit a single chair and table : 10
 And (lest the Muse should die with cold)
 A smoky grate my fire to hold :
 So wondrous small, 'twould much it pose
 To melt the icedrop on one's nose ;
 And yet so big, it covers o'er
 Full half the spacious room and more.

A window vainly stuff'd about,
 To keep November's breezes out,
 So crazy, that the panes proclaim
 That soon they mean to leave the frame. 20

My furniture I sure may crack—
 A broken chair without a back ;
 A table wanting just two legs,
 One end sustain'd by wooden pegs ;

A desk—of that I am not fervent, 25
The work of, sir, your humble servant ;
(Who, though I say't, am no such fumbler ;)
A glass decanter and a tumbler,
From which my night-parch'd throat I lave,
Luxurious, with the limpid wave. 30
A chest of drawers, in antique sections,
And saw'd by me in all directions ;
So small, sir, that whoever views 'em
Swears nothing but a doll could use 'em.
To these, if you will add a store
Of oddities upon the floor,
A pair of globes, electric balls,
Scales, quadrants, prisms, and cobbler's awls,
And crowds of books on rotten shelves,
Octavos, folios, quartos, twelves ; 40
I think, dear Ned, you curious dog,
You'll have my earthly catalogue.
But stay,—I nearly had left out
My bellows, destitute of snout ;
And on the walls, good Heavens ! why there
I've such a load of precious ware,
Of heads, and coins, and silver medals,
And organ works, and broken pedals ;
(For I was once a-building music,
Though soon of that employ I grew sick) ; 50
And skeletons of laws which shoot
All out of one primordial root ;
That you, at such a sight, would swear
Confusion's self had settled there.
There stands, just by a broken sphere,
A Cicero without an ear ;
A neck, on which, by logic good,
I know for sure a head once stood ;

But who it was the able master
Had moulded in the mimic plaster,
Whether 'twas Pope, or Coke, or Burn,
I never yet could justly learn :
But knowing well, that any head
Is made to answer for the dead,
(And sculptors first their faces frame,
And after pitch upon a name,
Nor think it aught of a misnomer
To christen Chaucer's busto Homer,
Because they both have beards, which, you know,
Will mark them well from Joan, and Juno,) 70
For some great man, I could not tell,
But Neck might answer just as well,
So perch'd it up, all in a row
With Chatham and with Cicero.

Then all around, in just degree,
A range of portraits you may see,
Of mighty men and eke of women,
Who are no whit inferior to men.

With these fair dames, and heroes round,
I call my garret classic ground. 80
For though confined, 'twill well contain
The ideal flights of Madam Brain.
No dungeon's walls, no cell confined
Can cramp the energies of mind !
Thus, though my heart may seem so small,
I've friends, and 'twill contain them all ;
And should it e'er become so cold
That these it will no longer hold,
No more may Heaven her blessings give,
I shall not then be fit to live. 90

DESCRIPTION OF A SUMMER'S EVE.

Down the sultry arc of day
The burning wheels have urged their way ;
And eve along the western skies
Sheds her intermingling dyes.
Down the deep, the miry lane,
Creaking comes the empty wain,
And driver on the shaft-horse sits,
Whistling now and then by fits :
And oft, with his accustom'd call,
Urging on the sluggish Ball. 10
The barn is still, the master's gone,
And thresher puts his jacket on ;
While Dick, upon the ladder tall,
Nails the dead kite to the wall.
Here comes shepherd Jack at last,
He has penn'd the sheepcote fast,
For 'twas but two nights before
A lamb was eaten on the moor :
His empty wallet Rover carries,
Nor for Jack, when near home, tarries. 20
With lolling tongue he runs to try
If the horse-trough be not dry.
The milk is settled in the pans,
And supper messes in the cans ;
In the hovel carts are wheel'd,
And both the colts are drove a-field ;
The horses are all bedded up,
And the ewe is with the tup.
The snare for Mister Fox is set,
The leaven laid, the thatching wet. 30
And Bess has slink'd away to talk
With Roger in the holly walk.

Now, on the settle all, but Bess, 33
 Are set to eat their supper mess ;
 And little Tom and roguish Kate
 Are swinging on the meadow-gate.
 Now they chat of various things,
 Of taxes, ministers, and kings,
 Or else tell all the village news,
 How madam did the squire refuse ; 40
 How parson on his tithes was bent,
 And landlord oft distrain'd for rent.
 Thus do they talk, till in the sky
 The pale-eyed moon is mounted high,
 And from the alehouse drunken Ned
 Had reel'd—then hasten all to bed.
 The mistress sees that lazy Kate
 The happing coal on kitchen grate
 Has laid ; while master goes throughout,
 Sees shutters fast, the mastiff out, 50
 The candles safe, the hearths all clear,
 And nought from thieves or fire to fear ;
 Then both to bed together creep,
 And join the general troop of sleep.

LINES

Written impromptu, on reading the following passage in Mr Capel Loft's
 beautiful and interesting Preface to Nathaniel Bloomfield's Poems, just
 published — 'It has a mixture of the sportive, which deepens the impres-
 sion of its melancholy close. I could have wished, as I have said in a
 short note, the conclusion had been otherwise. The sours of life less offend
 my taste than its sweets delight it.'

Go to the raging sea, and say, 'Be still !'
 Bid the wild lawless winds obey thy will ;

Preach to the storm, and reason with Despair, 3
But tell not Misery's son that life is fair.

Thou, who in Plenty's lavish lap hast roll'd,
And every year with new delight hast told,
Thou, who, recumbent on the lacquer'd barge,
Hast dropp'd down joy's gay stream of pleasant marge,
Thou mayst extol life's calm untroubled sea,
The storms of misery never burst on thee. 10

Go to the mat, where squalid Want reclines,
Go to the shade obscure, where Merit pines ;
Abide with him whom Penury's chains control,
And bind the rising yearnings of his soul,
Survey his sleepless couch, and, standing there,
Tell the poor pallid wretch that life is fair !

Press thou the lonely pillow of his head,
And ask why sleep his languid eyes has fled ;
Mark his dew'd temples, and his half-shut eye,
His trembling nostrils, and his deep-drawn sigh, 20
His muttering mouth contorted with despair,
And ask if genius could inhabit there.

Oh, yes ! that sunken eye with fire once gleam'd,
And rays of light from its full circlet stream'd :
But now neglect has stung him to the core,
And hope's wild raptures thrill his breast no more ;
Domestic anguish winds his vitals round,
And added grief compels him to the ground.
Lo ! o'er his manly form, decay'd and wan,
The shades of death with gradual steps steal on ; 30
And the pale mother, pining to decay,
Weeps for her boy her wretched life away.

Go, child of Fortune ! to his early grave,
Where o'er his head obscure the rank weeds wave ;
Behold the heart-wrung parent lay her head
On the cold turf, and ask to share his bed.

Go, child of Fortune, take thy lesson there, 27
And tell us then that life is wondrous fair !

Yet, Lofft, in thee, whose hand is still stretch'd forth,
To encourage genius, and to foster worth ;
On thee, the unhappy's firm, unfailing friend,
'Tis just that every blessing should descend ;
'Tis just that life to thee should only show
Her fairer side, but little mix'd with woe.

WRITTEN IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

SAD solitary Thought, who keep'st thy vigils,
Thy solemn vigils, in the sick man's mind ;
Communing lonely with his sinking soul,
And musing on the dubious glooms that lie
In dim obscurity before him,—thee,
Wrapp'd in thy dark magnificence, I call
At this still midnight hour, this awful season,
When on my bed, in wakeful restlessness,
I turn me wearisome ; while all around,
All, all, save me, sink in forgetfulness ; 10
I only wake to watch the sickly taper
Which lights me to my tomb. Yes, 'tis the hand
Of death I feel press heavy on my vitals,
Slow sapping the warm current of existence.
My moments now are few—the sand of life
Ebbs fastly to its finish. Yet a little,
And the last fleeting particle will fall
Silent, unseen, unnoticed, unlamented.
Come then, sad Thought, and let us meditate,
While meditate we may.—We have now 20
But a small portion of what men call time
To hold communion ; for even now the knife,

The separating knife, I feel divide 23
The tender bond that binds my soul to earth.
Yes, I must die—I feel that I must die ;
And though to me has life been dark and dreary,
Though Hope for me has smiled but to deceive,
And Disappointment still pursued her blandishments,
Yet do I feel my soul recoil within me
As I contemplate the dim gulf of death, 30
The shuddering void, the awful blank—futuraity.
Ay, I had plann'd full many a sanguine scheme
Of earthly happiness—romantic schemes,
And fraught with loveliness ; and it is hard
To feel the hand of Death arrest one's steps,
Throw a chill blight o'er all one's budding hopes,
And hurl one's soul untimely to the shades,
Lost in the gaping gulf of blank oblivion.
Fifty years hence, and who will hear of Henry ?
Oh ! none ;—another busy brood of beings 40
Will shoot up in the interim, and none
Will hold him in remembrance. I shall sink
As sinks a stranger in the crowded streets
Of busy London ;—some short bustle's caused,
A few inquiries, and the crowds close in,
And all's forgotten. On my grassy grave
The men of future times will careless tread,
And read my name upon the sculptured stone ;
Nor will the sound, familiar to their ears,
Recall my vanish'd memory. I did hope 50
For better things ! I hoped I should not leave
The earth without a vestige ;—Fate decrees
It shall be otherwise, and I submit.
Henceforth, oh, world, no more of thy desires !
No more of hope ! the wanton vagrant hope !
I abjure all. Now other cares engross me,

And my tired soul, with emulative haste, 57
Looks to its God, and prunes its wings for heaven.

VERSES.

WHEN pride and envy, and the scorn
Of wealth, my heart with gall imbued,
I thought how pleasant were the morn
Of silence, in the solitude ;
To hear the forest bee on wing ;
Or by the stream, or woodland spring,
To lie and muse alone—alone,
While the tinkling waters moan,
Or such wild sounds arise, as say,
Man and noise are far away. 10
Now, surely, thought I, there's enow
To fill life's dusty way ;
And who will miss a poet's feet,
Or wonder where he stray ?
So to the woods and wastes I'll go,
And I will build an osier bower,
And sweetly there to me shall flow
The meditative hour.
And when the autumn's withering hand,
Shall strew with leaves the sylvan land, 20
I'll to the forest caverns hie :
And in the dark and stormy nights
I'll listen to the shrieking sprites,
Who, in the wintry wolds and floods,
Keep jubilee, and shred the woods ;
Or, as it drifted soft and slow,
Hurl in ten thousand shapes the snow.

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FRAGMENT.

OH ! thou most fatal of Pandora's train,
 Consumption ! silent cheater of the eye ;
 Thou com'st not robed in agonising pain,
 Nor mark'st thy course with Death's delusive dye,
 But silent and unnoticed thou dost lie ;
 O'er life's soft springs thy venom dost diffuse,
 And, while thou giv'st new lustre to the eye,
 While o'er the cheek are spread health's ruddy hues,
 E'en then life's little rest thy cruel power subdues.
 Oft I've beheld thee, in the glow of youth, 10
 Hid 'neath the blushing roses which there bloom'd ;
 And dropp'd a tear, for then thy cankering tooth
 I knew would never stay till, all consumed,
 In the cold vault of death he were entomb'd.
 But oh ! what sorrow did I feel, as swift,
 Insidious ravager, I saw thee fly
 Through fair Lucina's breast of whitest snow,
 Preparing swift her passage to the sky.
 Though still intelligence beam'd in the glance,
 The liquid lustre of her fine blue eye ; 20
 Yet soon did languid listlessness advance,
 And soon she calmly sunk in death's repugnant trance.
 Even when her end was swiftly drawing near,
 And dissolution hover'd o'er her head :
 Even then so beauteous did her form appear,
 That none who saw her but admiring said,
 Sure so much beauty never could be dead.
 Yet the dark lash of her expressive eye
 Bent lowly down upon the languid—

.

FRAGMENT.

LOUD rage the winds without. The wintry cloud
O'er the cold north-star casts her fitting shroud ;
And Silence, pausing in some snow-clad dale,
Starts as she hears, by fits, the shrieking gale ;
Where now, shut out from every still retreat,
Her pine-clad summit, and her woodland seat,
Shall Meditation, in her saddest mood,
Retire o'er all her pensive stores to brood ?
Shivering and blue the peasant eyes askance
The drifted fleeces that around him dance, 10
And hurries on his half-averted form,
Stemming the fury of the sidelong storm.
Him soon shall greet his snow-topp'd [cot of thatch],
Soon shall his numb'd hand tremble on the latch,
Soon from his chimney's nook the cheerful flame
Diffuse a genial warmth throughout his frame ;
Round the light fire, while roars the north-wind
loud,
What merry groups of vacant faces crowd ;
These hail his coming—these his meal prepare,
And boast in all that cot no lurking care. 20
What though the social circle be denied,
Even Sadness brightens at her own fireside,
Loves, with fixed eye, to watch the fluttering blaze,
While musing Memory dwells on former days ;
Or Hope, bless'd spirit ! smiles—and still forgiven,
Forgets the passport, while she points to Heaven.
Then heap the fire—shut out the biting air,
And from its station wheel the easy-chair :
Thus fenced and warm, in silent fit, 'tis sweet
To hear without the bitter tempest beat, 30

All, all alone—to sit, and muse, and sigh,
The pensive tenant of obscurity.

31

.

TO A FRIEND IN DISTRESS,

WHO, WHEN THE AUTHOR REASONED WITH HIM CALMLY,
ASKED, 'IF HE DID NOT FEEL FOR HIM.'

'Do I not feel?' The doubt is keen as steel.
Yea, I do feel—most exquisitely feel;
My heart can weep, when, from my downcast eye,
I chase the tear, and stem the rising sigh:
Deep buried there I close the rankling dart,
And smile the most when heaviest is my heart.
On this I act—whatever pangs surround,
'Tis magnanimity to hide the wound!
When all was new, and life was in its spring,
I lived an unloved, solitary thing; 10
Even then I learn'd to bury deep from day
The piercing cares that wore my youth away:
Even then I learn'd for others' cares to feel!
Even then I wept I had not power to heal.
Even then, deep-sounding through the nightly gloom,
I heard the wretched's groan, and mourn'd the wretched's
doom.
Who were my friends in youth? The midnight fire—
The silent moonbeam, or the starry choir;
To these I 'plain'd, or turn'd from outer sight,
To bless my lonely taper's friendly light; 20
I never yet could ask, howe'er forlorn,
For vulgar pity mix'd with vulgar scorn;

The sacred source of woe I never ope,
 My breast's my coffer, and my God's my hope.
 But that I do feel, time, my friend, will show,
 Though the cold crowd the secret never know ;
 With them I laugh—yet, when no eye can see,
 I weep for nature, and I weep for thee.
 Yes, thou didst wrong me, . . . ; I fondly thought,
 In thee I'd found the friend my heart had sought ! 23
 I fondly thought, that thou couldst pierce the guise,
 And read the truth that in my bosom lies ;
 I fondly thought, ere time's last day were gone,
 Thy heart and mine had mingled into one !
 Yes—and they yet will mingle. Days and years
 Will fly, and leave us partners in our tears :
 We then shall feel that friendship has a power
 To soothe affliction in her darkest hour ;
 Time's trial o'er, shall clasp each other's hand,
 And wait the passport to a better land.
 Thine,

H. K. WHITE.

Half-past Eleven o'Clock at Night.

 CHRISTMAS DAY. 1804.

YET once more, and once more, awake, my harp,
 From silence and neglect—one lofty strain ;
 Lofty, yet wilder than the winds of Heaven,
 And speaking mysteries more than words can tell,
 I ask of thee ; for I, with hymnings high,
 Would join the dirge of the departing year.

Yet with no wintry garland from the woods,
 Wrought of the leafless branch or ivy sere,

Wreathe I thy tresses, dark December ! now ; 9
Me higher quarrel calls, with loudest song,
And fearful joy, to celebrate the day
Of the Redeemer. Near two thousand suns
Have set their seals upon the rolling lapse
Of generations, since the dayspring first
Beam'd from on high. Now, to the mighty mass
Of that increasing aggregate we add
One unit more,—space, in comparison,
How small, yet mark'd with how much misery ;
Wars, famines, and the fury, pestilence,
Over the nations hanging her dread scourge ; 20
The oppress'd, too, in silent bitterness,
Weeping their sufferance ; and the arm of wrong,
Forcing the scanty portion from the weak,
And steeping the lone widow's couch with tears.

So has the year been character'd with woe
In Christian land, and mark'd with wrongs and crimes ;
Yet 'twas not thus He taught—not thus He lived,
Whose birth we this day celebrate with prayer
And much thanksgiving. He, a man of woes,
Went on the way appointed,—path though rude, 30
Yet borne with patience still : He came to cheer
The broken-hearted, to raise up the sick,
And on the wandering and benighted mind
To pour the light of truth. Oh task divine !
Oh more than angel teacher ! He had words
To soothe the barking waves, and hush the winds ;
And when the soul was toss'd in troubled seas,
Wrapp'd in thick darkness and the howling storm,
He, pointing to the star of peace on high,
Arm'd it with holy fortitude, and bade it smile 40
At the surrounding wreck.—
When with deep agony his heart was rack'd

Not for himself the tear-drop dew'd his cheek, 43
 For them He wept, for them to Heaven He pray'd,
 His persecutors—'Father, pardon them,
 They know not what they do.'

Angels of Heaven,

Ye who beheld Him fainting on the cross,
 And did Him homage, say, may mortal join
 The halleluiahs of the risen God ?
 Will the faint voice and grovelling song be heard 50
 Amid the seraphim in light divine ?
 Yes, he will deign, the Prince of Peace will deign,
 For mercy, to accept the hymn of faith,
 Low though it be and humble. Lord of life,
 The Christ, the Comforter, thine advent now
 Fills my uprising soul. I mount, I fly
 Far o'er the skies, beyond the rolling orbs ;
 The bonds of flesh dissolve, and earth recedes,
 And care, and pain, and sorrow are no more.

NELSONI MORS.

YET once again, my Harp, yet once again
 One ditty more, and on the mountain ash
 I will again suspend thee. I have felt
 The warm tear frequent on my cheek, since last,
 At eventide, when all the winds were hush'd,
 I woke to thee the melancholy song.
 Since then with Thoughtfulness, a maid severe,
 I've journey'd, and have learn'd to shape the freaks
 Of frolic fancy to the line of truth ;
 Not unrepining, for my froward heart
 Still turns to thee, mine Harp, and to the flow

Of spring-gales past—the woods and storied haunts 12
 Of my not songless boyhood. Yet once more,
 Not fearless, I will wake thy tremulous tones,
 My long-neglected Harp! He must not sink;
 The good, the brave—he must not, shall not sink
 ‘Without the meed of some melodious tear.’

Though from the Muse's chalice I may pour
 No precious dew's of Aganippe's well
 Or Castaly,—though from the morning cloud 20
 I fetch no hues to scatter on his hearse:
 Yet will I wreath a garland for his brows,
 Of simple flowers, such as the hedge-rows scent
 Of Britain, my loved country; and with tears
 Most eloquent, yet silent, I will bathe
 Thy honour'd corse, my Nelson—tears as warm
 And honest as the ebbing blood that flow'd
 Fast from thy honest heart. Thou, Pity, too,
 If ever I have loved, with faltering step,
 To follow thee in the cold and starless night, 30
 To the top-crag of some rain-beaten cliff;
 And, as I heard the deep gun bursting loud
 Amid the pauses of the storm, have pour'd
 Wild strains, and mournful, to the hurrying winds,
 The dying soul's viaticum; if oft
 Amid the carnage of the field I've sate
 With thee upon the moonlight throne, and sung
 To cheer the fainting soldier's dying soul,
 With mercy and forgiveness—visitant
 Of Heaven—sit thou upon my Harp, 40
 And give it feeling, which were else too cold
 For argument so great, for theme so high.

How dimly on that morn the sun arose,
 'Kerchief'd in mists, and tearful, when—

.

EPIGRAM ON ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

BLOOMFIELD, thy happy omen'd name
Ensures continuance to thy fame:
Both sense and truth this verdict give,
While fields shall bloom, thy name shall live!

ELEGY

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF MR GILL, WHO WAS
DROWNED IN THE RIVER TRENT, WHILE BATHING,
9TH AUGUST 1802.

- 1 HE sunk, the impetuous river roll'd along,
The sullen wave betray'd his dying breath ;
And rising sad the rustling sedge among,
The gale of evening touch'd the chords of death.
- 2 Nymph of the Trent ! why didst thou not appear
To snatch the victim from thy felon wave !
Alas ! too late thou cam'st to embalm his bier,
And deck with waterflags his early grave.
- 3 Triumphant, riding o'er its timid prey,
Rolls the red stream in sanguinary pride ;
While anxious crowds, in vain, expectant stay,
And ask the swoll'n corse from the murdering tide.
- 4 The stealing tear-drop stagnates in the eye,
The sudden sigh by friendship's bosom proved,
I mark them rise—I mark the general sigh !
Unhappy youth ! and wert thou so beloved ?

- 5 On thee, as lone I trace the Trent's green brink,
 When the dim twilight slumbers on the glade ;
 On thee my thoughts shall dwell, nor Fancy shrink
 To hold mysterious converse with thy shade.
- 6 Of thee, as early, I, with vagrant feet,
 Hail the gray-sandall'd morn in Colwick's vale,
 Of thee my sylvan reed shall warble sweet,
 And wild-wood echoes shall repeat the tale.
- 7 And oh ! ye nymphs of Pæon ! who preside
 O'er running rill and salutary stream,
 Guard ye in future well the halcyon tide
 From the rude death-shriek and the dying scream.
-

INSCRIPTION FOR A MONUMENT TO THE MEMORY OF COWPER.

—READER ! if with no vulgar sympathy
 Thou view'st the wreck of genius and of worth,
 Stay thou thy footsteps near this hallow'd spot.
 Here Cowper rests. Although renown have made
 His name familiar to thine ear, this stone
 May tell thee that his virtues were above
 The common portion ; that the voice, now hush'd
 In death, was once serenely querulous
 With pity's tones, and in the ear of woe
 Spake music. Now, forgetful, at thy feet,
 His tired head presses on its last long rest,
 Still tenant of the tomb ; and on the cheek,
 Once warm with animation's lambent flush,
 Sits the pale image of unmark'd decay.

Yet mourn not. He had chosen the better part ; 16
And, these sad garments of mortality
Put off, we trust that to a happier land
He went a light and gladsome passenger.
Sigh'st thou for honours, reader ? Call to mind
That glory's voice is impotent to pierce 20
The silence of the tomb ! but virtue blooms
Even on the wreck of life, and mounts the skies.
So gird thy loins with lowliness, and walk
With Cowper on the pilgrimage of Christ.

‘I’M PLEASED, AND YET I’M SAD.’

- 1 WHEN twilight steals along the ground,
And all the bells are ringing round,
One, two, three, four, and five,
I at my study window sit,
And, wrapp'd in many a musing fit,
To bliss am all alive.
- 2 But though impressions calm and sweet
Thrill round my heart a holy heat,
And I am inly glad ;
The tear-drop stands in either eye,
And yet I cannot tell thee why,
I'm pleased, and yet I'm sad.
- 3 The silvery rack that flies away,
Like mortal life or pleasure's ray,
Does that disturb my breast ?
Nay, what have I, a studious man,
To do with life's unstable plan,
Or pleasure's fading vest ?

- 4 Is it that here I must not stop,
But o'er yon blue hill's woody top
Must bend my lonely way ?
No, surely no ! for give but me
My own fireside, and I shall be
At home where'er I stray.
- 5 Then is it that yon steeple there,
With music sweet shall fill the air,
When thou no more canst hear ?
Oh, no ! oh, no ! for then, forgiven,
I shall be with my God in heaven,
Released from every fear.
- 6 Then whence it is I cannot tell,
But there is some mysterious spell
That holds me when I'm glad ;
And so the tear-drop fills my eye,
When yet in truth I know not why,
Or wherefore I am sad.
-

SOLITUDE.

- 1 It is not that my lot is low,
That bids this silent tear to flow ;
It is not grief that bids me moan ;
It is that I am all alone.
- 2 In woods and glens I love to roam,
When the tired hedger hies him home :
Or by the woodland pool to rest,
When pale the star looks on its breast.

- 3 Yet when the silent evening sighs,
With hallow'd airs and symphonies,
My spirit takes another tone,
And sighs that it is all alone.
- 4 The autumn leaf is sere and dead,
It floats upon the water's bed ;
I would not be a leaf, to die
Without recording sorrow's sigh !
- 5 The woods and winds, with sullen wail,
Tell all the same unvaried tale ;
I've none to smile when I am free,
And when I sigh, to sigh with me.
- 6 Yet in my dreams a form I view,
That thinks on me, and loves me too ;
I start, and when the vision's flown,
I weep that I am all alone.
-

IF far from me the Fates remove
Domestic peace, connubial love,
The prattling ring, the social cheer,
Affection's voice, affection's tear,
Ye sterner powers, that bind the heart,
To me your iron aid impart !
Oh teach me, when the nights are chill,
And my fireside is lone and still ;
When to the blaze that crackles near,
I turn a tired and pensive ear,
And Nature conquering bids me sigh
For love's soft accents whispering nigh ;
Oh teach me, on that heavenly road,
That leads to Truth's occult abode.

To wrap my soul in dreams sublime,
Till earth and care no more be mine.
Let bless'd Philosophy impart
Her soothing measures to my heart ;
And while with Plato's ravish'd ears
I list the music of the spheres,
Or on the mystic symbols pore,
That hide the Chald's sublimer lore,
I shall not brood on summers gone,
Nor think that I am all alone.

FANNY ! upon thy breast I may not lie !
Fanny ! thou dost not hear me when I speak !
Where art thou, love ?—Around I turn my eye,
And as I turn, the tear is on my cheek.
Was it a dream ? or did my love behold
Indeed my lonely couch ? Methought the breath
Fann'd not her bloodless lip ; her eye was cold
And hollow, and the livery of death
Invested her pale forehead. Sainted maid !
My thoughts oft rest with thee in thy cold grave,
Through the long wintry night, when wind and wave
Rock the dark house where thy poor head is laid.
Yet hush ! my fond heart, hush ! there is a shore
Of better promise ; and I know at last,
When the long sabbath of the tomb is past,
We two shall meet in Christ—to part no more.

FRAGMENTS.¹

SAW'ST thou that light ? exclaim'd the youth, and paused :
Through yon dark firs it glanced, and on the stream

¹ These fragments were written upon the back of his mathematical papers, during the last year of his life.

That skirts the woods it for a moment play'd.
 Again, more light it gleam'd,—or does some sprite
 Delude mine eyes with shapes of wood and streams,
 And lamp far beaming through the thicket's gloom,
 As from some bosom'd cabin, where the voice
 Of revelry, or thrifty watchfulness,
 Keeps in the lights at this unwonted hour?
 No sprite deludes mine eyes—the beam now glows
 With steady lustre. Can it be the moon,
 Who, hidden long by the invidious veil
 That blots the Heavens, now sets behind the woods?
 No moon to-night has look'd upon the sea
 Of clouds beneath her, answer'd Rudiger,
 She has been sleeping with Endymion.

.

THE pious man,
 In this bad world, when mists and couchant storms
 Hide Heaven's fine circlet, springs aloft in faith
 Above the clouds that threat him, to the fields
 Of ether, where the day is never veil'd
 With intervening vapours ; and looks down
 Serene upon the troublous sea, that hides
 The earth's fair breast, that sea whose nether face
 To grovelling mortals frowns and darkens all ;
 But on whose billowy back, from man conceal'd,
 The glaring sunbeam plays.

Lo ! on the eastern summit, clad in gray,
 Morn, like a horseman girt for travel, comes,
 And from his tower of mist,
 Night's watchman hurries down.

THERE was a little bird upon that pile ;
It perch'd upon a ruin'd pinnacle,
And made sweet melody.
The song was soft, yet cheerful, and most clear,
For other note none swell'd the air but his.
It seem'd as if the little chorister
Sole tenant of the melancholy pile,
Were a lone hermit, outcast from his kind,
Yet withal cheerful. I have heard the note
Echoing so lonely o'er the aisle forlorn,
—Much musing—

OH pale art thou, my lamp, and faint
Thy melancholy ray :
When the still night's unclouded saint
Is walking on her way.
Through my lattice leaf embower'd,
Fair she sheds her shadowy beam,
And o'er my silent sacred room
Casts a checker'd twilight gloom ;
I throw aside the learnèd sheet,
I cannot choose but gaze, she looks so mildly sweet.
Sad vestal, why art thou so fair,
Or why am I so frail ?

METHINKS thou lookest kindly on me, Moon,
And cheerest my lone hours with sweet regards !
Surely like me thou 'rt sad, but dost not speak
Thy sadness to the cold unheeding crowd ;
So mournfully composed, o'er yonder cloud
Thou shinest, like a cresset, beaming far
From the rude watch-tower, o'er the Atlantic wave.

OH give me music—for my soul doth faint ;
 I'm sick of noise and care, and now mine ear
 Longs for some air of peace, some dying plaint,
 That may the spirit from its cell unsphere.

Hark how it falls ! and now it steals along,
 Like distant bells upon the lake at eve,
 When all is still ; and now it grows more strong,
 As when the choral train their dirges weave,
 Mellow and many-voiced ; where every close,
 O'er the old minster roof, in echoing waves reflows.

Oh ! I am rapt aloft. My spirit soars
 Beyond the skies, and leaves the stars behind.
 Lo ! angels lead me to the happy shores,
 And floating pæans fill the buoyant wind.
 Farewell ! base earth, farewell ! my soul is freed,
 Far from its clayey cell it springs—

.

AND must thou go, and must we part ?
 Yes, Fate decrees, and I submit ;
 The pang that rends in twain my heart,
 Oh, Fanny, dost thou share in it ?

Thy sex is fickle,—when away
 Some happier youth may win thy

.

AH ! who can say, however fair his view,
 Through what sad scenes his path may lie ?
 Ah ! who can give to others' woes his sigh,
 Secure his own will never need it too ?

Let thoughtless youth its seeming joys pursue,
 Soon will they learn to scan with thoughtful eye
 The illusive past and dark futurity ;
 Soon will they know—

.

HUSH'D is the lyre—the hand that swept
 The low and pensive wires,
 Robb'd of its cunning, from the task retires.

Yes—it is still—the lyre is still ;
 The spirit which its slumbers broke
 Hath pass'd away,—and that weak hand that woke
 Its forest melodies hath lost its skill.

Yet I would press you to my lips once more,
 Ye wild, yet withering flowers of poesy ;
 Yet would I drink the fragrance which ye pour,
 Mix'd with decaying odours : for to me
 Ye have beguiled the hours of infancy,
 As in the wood-paths of my native—

.

WHEN high romance o'er every wood and stream
 Dark lustre shed, my infant mind to fire,
 Spell-struck, and fill'd with many a wondering dream,
 First in the groves I woke the pensive lyre,
 All there was mystery then, the gust that woke
 The midnight echo was a spirit's dirge,
 And unseen fairies would the moon invoke
 To their light morrice by the restless surge.
 Now to my sober'd thought with life's false smiles,
 Too much
 The vagrant Fancy spreads no more her wiles,
 And dark forebodings now my bosom fill.

ONCE more, and yet once more,
 I give unto my harp a dark-woven lay ;
I heard the waters roar,
 I heard the flood of ages pass away.
Oh thou, stern spirit ! who dost dwell
 In thine eternal celi,
Noting, gray chronicler ! the silent years,
 I saw thee rise—I saw the scroll complete ;
 Thou spakest, and at thy feet
 The universe gave way.

FRAGMENT OF AN ECCENTRIC DRAMA.

WRITTEN AT A VERY EARLY AGE.

THE DANCE OF THE CONSUMPTIVES.

DING-DONG ! ding-dong !
Merry, merry go the bells,
 Ding-dong ! ding-dong !
Over the heath, over the moor, and over the dale,
 ‘Swinging slow with sullen roar,’
Dance, dance away the jocund roundelay !
Ding-dong, ding-dong calls us away.

Round the oak, and round the elm,
 Merrily foot it o’er the ground !
The sentry ghost it stands aloof,
 So merrily, merrily foot it round.
 Ding-dong ! ding-dong !
 Merry, merry go the bells,

Swelling in the nightly gale, 14
 The sentry ghost,
 It keeps its post,

And soon, and soon our sports must fail ;
 But let us trip the nightly ground,
 While the merry, merry bells ring round.

Hark ! hark ! the deathwatch ticks ! 20
 See, see, the winding-sheet !
 Our dance is done,
 Our race is run,
 And we must lie at the alder's feet !
 Ding-dong ! ding-dong !
 Merry, merry go the bells,
 Swinging o'er the weltering wave !
 And we must seek
 Our deathbeds bleak,

Where the green sod grows upon the grave. 30

[They vanish—The Goddess of Consumption descends, habited in a sky-blue robe, attended by mournful music.]

Come, Melancholy, sister mine !

Cold the dews, and chill the night !

Come from thy dreary shrine !

The wan moon climbs the heavenly height,

And underneath her sickly ray

Troops of squalid spectres play,

And the dying mortals' groan

Startles the Night on her dusky throne.

Come, come, sister mine !

Gliding on the pale moonshine : 40

We'll ride at ease

On the tainted breeze,

And oh ! our sport will be divine.

[The Goddess of Melancholy advances out of a deep glen in the rear, habited in black, and covered with a thick veil.—She speaks.]

Sister, from my dark abode, 44
Where nests the raven, sits the toad,
Hither I come, at thy command :
Sister, sister, join thy hand !
I will smooth the way for thee,
Thou shalt furnish food for me.
Come, let us speed our way 50
Where the troops of spectres play ;
To charnel-houses, churchyards drear,
Where Death sits with a horrible leer,
A lasting grin, on a throne of bones,
And skim along the blue tombstones.
Come, let us speed away,
Lay our snares, and spread our tether !
I will smooth the way for thee,
Thou shalt furnish food for me ;
And the grass shall wave 60
O'er many a grave,
Where youth and beauty sleep together.

CONSUMPTION.

Come, let us speed our way,
Join our hands, and spread our tether !
I will furnish food for thee,
Thou shalt smooth the way for me !
And the grass shall wave
O'er many a grave,
Where youth and beauty sleep together.

MELANCHOLY.

Hist, sister, hist ! who comes here ? 70
Oh ! I know her by that tear,

By that blue eye's languid glare, 72
 By her skin, and by her hair :
 She is mine,
 And she is thine,
 Now the deadliest draught prepare.

CONSUMPTION.

In the dismal night-air dress'd
 I will creep into her breast :
 Flush her cheek, and bleach her skin,
 And feed on the vital fire within. 80
 Lover ! do not trust her eyes—
 When they sparkle most, she dies !
 Mother ! do not trust her breath—
 Comfort she will breathe in death !
 Father ! do not strive to save her—
 She is mine, and I must have her !
 The coffin must be her bridal-bed ;
 The winding-sheet must wrap her head ;
 The whispering winds must o'er her sigh,
 For soon in the grave the maid must lie : 90
 The worm it will riot
 On heavenly diet,
 When death has deflower'd her eye.

[They vanish.

While Consumption speaks, Angelina enters.]

ANGELINA.

With¹ what a silent and dejected pace
 Dost thou, wan moon ! upon thy way advance
 In the blue welkin's vault ! Pale wanderer !
 Hast thou, too, felt the pangs of hopeless love,
 That thus, with such a melancholy grace,

¹ With how sad steps, O moon ! thou climb'st the skies,
 How silently, and with how wan a face !'—*Sir P. Sidney.*

Thou dost pursue thy solitary course ? 99
Has thy Endymion, smooth-faced boy ! forsook
Thy widow'd breast on which the spoiler oft
Has nestled fondly, while the silver clouds
Fantastic pillow'd thee, and the dim night,
Obsequious to thy will, encurtain'd round
With its thick fringe thy couch ? Wan traveller,
How like thy fate to mine ! Yet I have still
One heavenly hope remaining, which thou lack'st ;
My woes will soon be buried in the grave
Of kind forgetfulness ; my journey here,
Though it be darksome, joyless, and forlorn, 110
Is yet but short, and soon my weary feet
Will greet the peaceful inn of lasting rest.
But thou, unhappy queen ! art doom'd to trace
Thy lonely walk in the drear realms of night,
While many a lagging age shall sweep beneath
The leaden pinions of unshaken time ;
Though not a hope shall spread its glittering hue
To cheat thy steps along the weary way.
Oh that the sum of human happiness
Should be so trifling and so frail withal, 120
That when possess'd, it is but lessen'd grief ;
And even then there 's scarce a sudden gust
That blows across the dismal waste of life,
But bears it from the view. Oh ! who would shun
The hour that cuts from earth, and fear to press
The calm and peaceful pillows of the grave,
And yet endure the various ills of life,
And dark vicissitudes ! Soon, I hope, I feel,
'And am assured, that I shall lay my head,
My weary aching head, on its last rest, 130
And on my lowly bed the grass-green sod
Will flourish sweetly. And then they will weep

That one so young, and what they're pleased to call 133
 So beautiful, should die so soon, and tell
 How painful Disappointment's canker'd fang
 Wither'd the rose upon my maiden cheek.
 Oh, foolish ones ! why, I shall sleep so sweetly,
 Laid in my darksome grave, that they themselves
 Might envy me my rest ! And as for them,
 Who, on the score of former intimacy, 140
 May thus remembrance me—they must themselves
 Successive fall.

Around the winter fire

(When out-a-doors the biting frost congeals,
 And shrill the skater's irons on the pool
 Ring loud, as by the moonlight he performs
 His graceful evolutions) they not long
 Shall sit and chat of older times, and feats
 Of early youth, but silent, one by one,
 Shall drop into their shrouds. Some in their age,
 Ripe for the sickle ; others young, like me, 150
 And falling green beneath the untimely stroke.
 Thus, in short time, in the churchyard forlorn,
 Where I shall lie, my friends will lay them down,
 And dwell with me, a happy family.
 And oh ! thou cruel, yet beloved youth,
 Who now hast left me hopeless here to mourn,
 Do thou but shed one tear upon my corse,
 And say that I was gentle, and deserved
 A better lover, and I shall forgive
 All, all thy wrongs ;—and then do thou forget 160
 The hapless Margaret, and be as bless'd
 As wish can make thee—laugh, and play, and sing
 With thy dear choice, and never think of me.

Yet hist, I hear a step. In this dark wood—

.

TO A FRIEND.

WRITTEN AT A VERY EARLY AGE.

I've read, my friend, of Dioclesian,
 And many another noble Grecian,
 Who wealth and palaces resign'd,
 In cots the joys of peace to find ;
 Maximian's meal of turnip-tops
 (Disgusting food to dainty chops)
 I've also read of, without wonder ;
 But such a cursed egregious blunder,
 As that a man of wit and sense
 Should leave his books to hoard up pence, 10
 Forsake the loved Aonian maids
 For all the petty tricks of trades,
 I never, either now or long since,
 Have heard of such a piece of nonsense ;
 That one who learning's joys had felt,
 And at the Muse's altar knelt,
 Should leave a life of sacred leisure
 To taste the accumulating pleasure ;
 And metamorphosed to an alley duck,
 Grovel in loads of kindred muck. 20
 Oh ! 'tis beyond my comprehension !
 A courtier throwing up his pension,
 A lawyer working without a fee,
 A parson giving charity,
 A truly pious Methodist preacher,
 Are not, egad, so out of nature.
 Had nature made thee half a fool,
 But given thee wit to keep a school,

I had not stared at thy backsliding : 29
 But when thy wit I can confide in,
 When well I know thy just pretence
 To solid and exalted sense ;
 When well I know that on thy head
 Philosophy her lights hath shed,
 I stand aghast ! thy virtues sum too,
 And wonder what this world will come to !
 Yet, whence this strain ? shall I repine
 That thou alone dost singly shine ?
 Shall I lament that thou alone,
 Of men of parts, hast prudence known ? 40

LINES ON READING THE POEMS OF WARTON.

AGE FOURTEEN.

O WARTON! to thy soothing shell,
 Stretch'd remote in hermit cell,
 Where the brook runs babbling by,
 For ever I could listening lie ;
 And catching all the Muses' fire,
 Hold converse with the tuneful choir.
 What pleasing themes thy page adorn,
 The ruddy streaks of cheerful morn,
 The pastoral pipe, the ode sublime,
 And Melancholy's mournful chime ! 10
 Each with unwonted graces shines
 In thy ever lovely lines.
 Thy Muse deserves the lasting meed ;
 Attuning sweet the Dorian reed,

Now the lovelorn swain complains, 15
 And sings his sorrows to the plains ;
 Now the sylvan scenes appear
 Through all the changes of the year ;
 Or the elegiac strain
 Softly sings of mental pain, 20
 And mournful diapasons sail
 On the faintly dying gale.
 But ah ! the soothing scene is o'er,
 On middle flight we cease to soar,
 For now the Muse assumes a bolder sweep,
 Strikes on the lyric string her sorrows deep,
 In strains unheard before.
 Now, now the rising fire thrills high,
 Now, now to heaven's high realms we fly,
 And every throne explore : 30
 The soul entranced, on mighty wings,
 With all the poet's heat upsprings,
 And loses earthly woes ;
 Till all alarm'd at the giddy height,
 The Muse descends on gentler flight,
 And lulls the wearied soul to soft repose.

FRAGMENT.

. THE western gale,
 Mild as the kisses of connubial love,
 Plays round my languid limbs, as all dissolved,
 Beneath the ancient elm's fantastic shade
 I lie, exhausted with the noontide heat :
 While rippling o'er its deep-worn pebble bed,
 The rapid rivulet rushes at my feet,

Dispensing coolness. On the fringed marge 8
 Full many a flowcret rears its head, or pink,
 Or gaudy daffodil. 'Tis here, at noon,
 The buskin'd wood-nymphs from the heat retire,
 And lave them in the fountain ; here secure
 From Pan, or savage satyr, they disport :
 Or stretch'd supinely on the velvet turf,
 Lull'd by the laden bee, or sultry fly,
 Invoke the god of slumber. . . .

.
 And, hark ! how merrily, from distant tower,
 Ring round the village bells ! now on the gale
 They rise with gradual swell, distinct and loud ;
 Anon they die upon the pensive ear, 29
 Melting in faintest music. They bespeak
 A day of jubilee, and oft they bear,
 Commix'd along the unfrequented shore,
 The sound of village dance and tabor loud,
 Startling the musing ear of Solitude.

Such is the jocund wake of Whitsuntide,
 When happy Superstition, gabbling eld !
 Holds her unhurtful gambols. All the day
 The rustic revellers ply the mazy dance
 On the smooth shaven green, and then at eve 30
 Commence the harmless rites and auguries ;
 And many a tale of ancient days goes round.

They tell of wizard seer, whose potent spells
 Could hold in dreadful thrall the labouring moon,
 Or draw the fix'd stars from their eminence,
 And still the midnight tempest. Then anon
 Tell of uncharnell'd spectres, seen to glide
 Along the lone wood's unfrequented path,
 Startling the 'nighted traveller ; while the sound
 Of undistinguish'd murmurs, heard to come 40

From the dark centre of the deepening glen, 41
Struck on his frozen ear.

O Ignorance !

Thou art fallen man's best friend ! With thee he speeds
In frigid apathy along his way ;
And never does the tear of agony
Burn down his scorching cheek, or the keen steel
Of wounded feeling penetrate his breast.

E'en now, as leaning on this fragrant bank,
I taste of all the keener happiness
Which sense refined affords—e'en now my heart 50
Would fain induce me to forsake the world,
Throw off these garments, and in shepherd's weeds,
With a small flock, and short suspended reed,
To sojourn in the woodland. Then my thought
Draws such gay pictures of ideal bliss,
That I could almost err in reason's spite,
And trespass on my judgment.

Such is life :

The distant prospect always seems more fair,
And when attain'd, another still succeeds,
Far fairer than before, yet compass'd round 60
With the same dangers, and the same dismay.
And we poor pilgrims in this dreary maze,
Still discontented, chase the fairy form
Of unsubstantial Happiness, to find,
When life itself is sinking in the strife,
'Tis but an airy bubble and a cheat.

COMMENCEMENT OF A POEM ON DESPAIR.

SOME to Aonian lyres of silver sound
With winning elegance attune their song,
Form'd to sink lightly on the soothèd sense,
And charm the soul with softest harmony :
'Tis then that Hope with sanguine eye is seen
Roving through Fancy's gay futurity ;
Her heart light dancing to the sounds of pleasure,
Pleasure of days to come. Memory, too, then
Comes with her sister, Melancholy sad,
Pensively musing on the scenes of youth, 10
Scenes never to return.¹

Such subjects merit poets used to raise
The Attic verse harmonious ; but for me
A dreadlier theme demands my backward hand,
And bids me strike the strings of dissonance
With frantic energy.
'Tis wan Despair I sing, if sing I can
Of him before whose blast the voice of Song,
And Mirth, and Hope, and Happiness all fly,
Nor ever dare return. His notes are heard 20
At noon of night, where, on the coast of blood,
The lacerated son of Angola
Howls forth his sufferings to the moaning wind ;
And, when the awful silence of the night
Strikes the chill death-dew to the murderer's heart,
He speaks in every conscience-prompted word
Half utter'd, half suppress'd.
'Tis him I sing—Despair—terrific name,
Striking unsteadily the tremulous chord

¹ Alluding to the two pleasing poems, the 'Pleasures of Hope' and of 'Memory.'

Of timorous terror—discord in the sound : 30
For to a theme revolting as is this,
Dare not I woo the maids of harmony,
Who love to sit and catch the soothing sound
Of lyre Æolian, or the martial bugle,
Calling the hero to the field of glory,
And firing him with deeds of high emprise
And warlike triumph : but from scenes like mine
Shrink they affrighted, and detest the bard
Who dares to sound the hollow tones of horror.

Hence, then, soft maids, 40
And woo the silken zephyr in the bowers
By Heliconia's sleep-inviting stream :
For aid like yours I seek not ; 'tis for powers
Of darker hue to inspire a verse like mine !
'Tis work for wizards, sorcerers, and fiends.

Hither, ye furious imps of Acheron,
Nurslings of hell, and beings shunning light,
And all the myriads of the burning concave :
Souls of the damned : hither, oh ! come and join
The infernal chorus. 'Tis Despair I sing ! 50
He, whose sole tooth inflicts a deadlier pang
Than all your tortures join'd. Sing, sing Despair !
Repeat the sound, and celebrate his power ;
Unite shouts, screams, and agonising shrieks,
Till the loud pæan ring through hell's high vault,
And the remotest spirits of the deep
Leap from the lake, and join the dreadful song.

THE EVE OF DEATH.

IRREGULAR.

- 1 SILENCE of death—portentous calm,
Those airy forms that yonder fly
Denote that your void foreruns a storm,
That the hour of fate is nigh.
I see, I see, on the dim mist borne,
The Spirit of battles rear his crest !
I see, I see, that ere the morn,
His spear will forsake its hated rest,
And the widow'd wife of Larrendill will beat her
naked breast.
- 2 O'er the smooth bosom of the sullen deep,
No softly ruffling zephyrs fly ;
But nature sleeps a deathless sleep,
For the hour of battle is nigh.
Not a loose leaf waves on the dusky oak,
But a creeping stillness reigns around ;
Except when the raven, with ominous croak,
On the ear does unwelcomely sound.
I know, I know what this silence means :
I know what the raven saith—
Strike, oh, ye bards ! the melancholy harp,
For this is the eve of death.
- 3 Behold, how along the twilight air
The shades of our fathers glide !
There Morven fled, with the blood-drench'd hair,
And Colma with gray side.

No gale around its coolness flings,
Yet sadly sigh the gloomy trees ;
And hark ! how the harp's unvisited strings
Sound sweet, as if swept by a whispering breeze !
'Tis done ! the sun he has set in blood !
He will never set more to the brave ;
Let us pour to the hero the dirge of death,
For to-morrow he hies to the grave.

THANATOS.

OH ! who would cherish life,
And cling unto this heavy clog of clay,
Love this rude world of strife,
Where glooms and tempests cloud the fairest day ;
And where, 'neath outward smiles,
Conceal'd the snake lies feeding on its prey,
Where pitfalls lie in every flowery way,
And sirens lure the wanderer to their wiles !
Hateful it is to me,
Its riotous railings and revengeful strife ; 10
I'm tired with all its screams and brutal shouts
Dinning the ear ;—away—away with life !
And welcome, oh ! thou silent maid,
Who in some foggy vault art laid,
Where never daylight's dazzling ray
Comes to disturb thy dismal sway ;
And there amid unwholesome damps dost sleep,
In such forgetful slumbers deep,
That all thy senses stupified
Are to marble petrified. 20
Sleepy Death, I welcome thee !
Sweet are thy calms to misery.

Poppies I will ask no more, 23
Nor the fatal hellebore ;
Death is the best, the only cure,
His are slumbers ever sure.
Lay me in the Gothic tomb,
In whose solemn fretted gloom
I may lie in mouldering state,
With all the grandeur of the great : 30
Over me, magnificent,
Carve a stately monument ;
Then thereon my statue lay,
With hands in attitude to pray,
And angels serve to hold my head,
Weeping o'er the father dead.
Duly too at close of day
Let the pealing organ play ;
And while the harmonious thunders roll,
Chant a vesper to my soul : 40
Thus how sweet my sleep will be,
Shut out from thoughtful misery !

ATHANATOS.

AWAY with Death—away
With all her sluggish sleeps and chilling damps,
Impervious to the day,
Where nature sinks into inanity !
How can the soul desire
Such hateful nothingness to crave,
And yield with joy the vital fire
To moulder in the grave ?
Yet mortal life is sad,

Eternal storms molest its sullen sky ; 10
And sorrows ever rife
Drain the sacred fountain dry—
Away with mortal life !

But, hail the calm reality,
The seraph Immortality !
Hail the heavenly bowers of peace,
Where all the storms of passion cease.
Wild life's dismaying struggle o'er,
The wearied spirit weeps no more ;
But wears the eternal smile of joy, 20
Tasting bliss without alloy.
Welcome, welcome, happy bowers,
Where no passing tempest lowers ;
But the azure heavens display
The everlasting smile of day ;
Where the choral seraph choir
Strike to praise the harmonious lyre ;
And the spirit sinks to ease,
Lull'd by distant symphonies.
Oh ! to think of meeting there 30
The friends whose graves received our tear,
The daughter loved, the wife adored,
To our widow'd arms restored ;
And all the joys which death did sever,
Given to us again for ever !
Who would cling to wretched life,
And hug the poison'd thorn of strife ;
Who would not long from earth to fly,
A sluggish senseless lump to lie,
When the glorious prospect lies 40
Full before his raptured eyes ?

MUSIC.

WRITTEN BETWEEN THE AGES OF FOURTEEN AND FIFTEEN,
WITH A FEW SUBSEQUENT VERBAL ALTERATIONS.

- 1 Music, all powerful o'er the human mind,
Can still each mental storm, each tumult calm,
Soothe anxious Care on sleepless couch reclined,
And e'en fierce Anger's furious rage disarm.
- 2 At her command the various passions lie ;
She stirs to battle, or she lulls to peace ;
Melts the charm'd soul to thrilling ecstasy,
And bids the jarring world's harsh clangour cease.
- 3 Her martial sounds can fainting troops inspire
With strength unwonted, and enthusiasm raise ;
Infuse new ardour, and with youthful fire
Urge on the warrior gray with length of days.
- 4 Far better she, when with her soothing lyre,
She charms the falchion from the savage grasp,
And melting into pity vengeful ire,
Looses the bloody breastplate's iron clasp.
- 5 With her in pensive mood I long to roam,
At midnight's hour, or evening's calm decline,
And thoughtful o'er the falling streamlet's foam,
In calm seclusion's hermit walks recline.
- 6 Whilst mellow sounds from distant copse arise,
Of softest flute or reeds harmonic join'd,
With rapture thrill'd each worldly passion dies,
And pleased attention claims the passive mind.

- 7 Soft through the dell the dying strains retire,
Then burst majestic in the varied swell ;
Now breathe melodious as the Grecian lyre,
Or on the ear in sinking cadence dwell.
- 3 Romantic sounds ! such is the bliss ye give,
That heaven's bright scenes seem bursting on the soul ;
With joy I'd yield each sensual wish, to live
For ever 'neath your undefiled control.
- 9 Oh ! surely melody from heaven was sent,
To cheer the soul when tired with human strife,
To soothe the wayward heart by sorrow rent,
And soften down the rugged road of life.
-

ON BEING CONFINED TO SCHOOL ONE
PLEASANT MORNING IN SPRING.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF THIRTEEN.

THE morning sun's enchanting rays
Now call forth every songster's praise ;
Now the lark, with upward flight,
Gaily ushers in the light ;
While wildly warbling from each tree,
The birds sing songs to Liberty.
But for me no songster sings,
For me no joyous lark upsprings ;
For I, confined in gloomy school,
Must own the pedant's iron rule,
And far from sylvan shades and bowers,
In durance vile must pass the hours ;

There con the scholiast's dreary lines, 13
Where no bright ray of genius shines,
And close to rugged learning cling,
While laughs around the jocund spring.
How gladly would my soul forego
All that arithmeticians know,
Or stiff grammarians quaintly teach,
Or all that industry can reach, 20
To taste each morn of all the joys
That with the laughing sun arise ;
And unconstrain'd to rove along
The bushy brakes and glens among ;
And woo the Muse's gentle power
In unfrequented rural bower :
But, ah ! such heaven-approaching joys
Will never greet my longing eyes ;
Still will they cheat in vision fine,
Yet never but in fancy shine. 30

Oh, that I were the little wren
That shrilly chirps from yonder glen !
Oh, far away I then would rove
To some secluded bushy grove ;
There hop and sing with careless glee,
Hop and sing at liberty ;
And, till death should stop my lays,
Far from men would spend my days.

TO CONTEMPLATION.

THEE do I own, the prompter of my joys,
The soother of my cares, inspiring peace ;
And I will ne'er forsake thee. Men may rave,
And blame and censure me, that I don't tie

My every thought down to the desk, and spend 5
The morning of my life in adding figures
With accurate monotony : that so
The good things of the world may be my lot,
And I might taste the blessedness of wealth :
But, oh ! I was not made for money-getting ; 10
For me no much respected *Plum* awaits,
Nor civic honour, envied. For as still
I tried to cast with school dexterity
The interesting sums, my vagrant thoughts
Would quick revert to many a woodland haunt,
Which fond remembrance cherish'd, and the pen
Dropp'd from my senseless fingers as I pictured,
In my mind's eye, how on the shores of Trent
I erewhile wander'd with my early friends
In social intercourse. And then I'd think 20
How contrary pursuits had thrown us wide,
One from the other, scatter'd o'er the globe ;
They were set down with sober steadiness,
Each to his occupation. I alone,
A wayward youth, misled by Fancy's vagaries,
Remain'd unsettled, insecure, and veering
With every wind to every point of the compass.
Yes, in the counting-house I could indulge
In fits of close abstraction ; yea, amid
The busy bustling crowds could meditate, 30
And send my thoughts ten thousand leagues away
Beyond the Atlantic, resting on my friend.
Ay, Contemplation, even in earliest youth
I woo'd thy heavenly influence ! I would walk
A weary way when all my toils were done,
To lay myself at night in some lone wood,
And hear the sweet song of the nightingale.
Oh, those were times of happiness, and still

To memory doubly dear ; for growing years 39
Had not then taught me man was made to mourn ;
And a short hour of solitary pleasure,
Stolen from sleep, was ample recompense
For all the hateful bustles of the day.
My opening mind was ductile then, and plastic,
And soon the marks of care were worn away,
While I was sway'd by every novel impulse,
Yielding to all the fancies of the hour.
But it has now assumed its character ;
Mark'd by strong lineaments, its haughty tone,
Like the firm oak, would sooner break than bend. 50
Yet still, O Contemplation ! I do love
To indulge thy solemn musings ; still the same
With thee alone I know to melt and weep,
In thee alone delighting. Why along
The dusky tract of commerce should I toil,
When, with an easy competence content,
I can alone be happy ; where with thee
I may enjoy the loveliness of Nature,
And loose the wings of Fancy ? Thus alone
Can I partake of happiness on earth ; 60
And to be happy here is man's chief end,
For to be happy he must needs be good.

MY OWN CHARACTER.

ADDRESSED (DURING ILLNESS) TO A LADY.

DEAR FANNY, I mean, now I'm laid on the shelf,
To give you a sketch—ay, a sketch of myself.
'Tis a pitiful subject, I frankly confess,
And one it would puzzle a painter to dress ;

But, however, here goes, and as sure as a gun, 5
 I'll tell all my faults like a penitent nun ;
 For I know, for my Fanny, before I address her,
 She won't be a cynical father confessor.

Come, come, 'twill not do ! put that curling brow down ;
 You can't, for the soul of you, learn how to frown. 10
 Well, first I premise, it's my honest conviction,
 That my breast is a chaos of all contradiction ;
 Religious—deistic—now loyal and warm ;
 Then a dagger-drawn democrat hot for reform :
 This moment a fop, that, sententious as Titus ;
 Democritus now, and anon Heraclitus ;
 Now laughing and pleased, like a child with a rattle ;
 Then vex'd to the soul with impertinent tattle ;
 Now moody and sad, now unthinking and gay,
 To all points of the compass I veer in a day. 20

I'm proud and disdainful to Fortune's gay child,
 But to Poverty's offspring submissive and mild ;
 As rude as a boor, and as rough in dispute ;
 Then, as for politeness—oh ! dear—I'm a brute !
 I show no respect where I never can feel it ;
 And as for contempt, take no pains to conceal it,
 And so in the suite, by these laudable ends,
 I've a great many foes, and a very few friends.

And yet, my dear Fanny, there are who can feel
 That this proud heart of mine is not fashion'd of steel.
 It can love (can it not ?)—it can hate, I am sure ; 31
 And it's friendly enough, though in friends it be poor.
 For itself though it bleed not, for others it bleeds ;
 If it have not ripe virtues, I'm sure it's the seeds ;
 And though far from faultless, or even so-so,
 I think it may pass as our worldly things go.

Well, I've told you my frailties without any gloss ;
 Then as to my virtues, I'm quite at a loss !

I think I'm devout, and yet I can't say, 39
 But in process of time I may get the wrong way.
 I'm a general lover, if that's commendation,
 And yet can't withstand, you know whose fascination.
 But I find that amidst all my tricks and devices,
 In fishing for virtues, I'm pulling up vices ;
 So as for the good, why, if I possess it,
 I am not yet learnèd enough to express it.

You yourself must examine the lovelier side,
 And after your every art you have tried,
 Whatever my faults, I may venture to say,
 Hypocrisy never will come in your way. 50
 I am upright, I hope ; I'm downright, I'm clear ;
 And I think my worst foe must allow I'm sincere ;
 And if ever sincerity glow'd in my breast,
 'Tis now when I swear.

LINES WRITTEN IN WILFORD CHURCHYARD.

ON RECOVERY FROM SICKNESS.

HERE would I wish to sleep. This is the spot
 Which I have long mark'd out to lay my bones in.
 Tired out and wearied with the riotous world,
 Beneath this yew I would be sepulchred.
 It is a lovely spot ! The sultry sun,
 From his meridian height, endeavours vainly
 To pierce the shadowy foliage, while the zephyr
 Comes wafting gently o'er the rippling Trent,
 And plays about my wan cheek. 'Tis a nook
 Most pleasant. Such a one perchance did Gray 10
 Frequent, as with a vagrant Muse he wanton'd.

Come, I will sit me down and meditate, 12
For I am wearied with my summer's walk ;
And here I may repose in silent ease ;
And thus, perchance, when life's sad journey's o'er,
My harass'd soul, in this same spot, may find
The haven of its rest—beneath this sod
Perchance may sleep it sweetly, sound as death.

I would not have my corpse cemented down
With brick and stone, defrauding the poor earthworm
Of its predestined dues ; no, I would lie 21
Beneath a little hillock, grass o'ergrown,
Swathed down with osiers, just as sleep the cotters.
Yet may not undistinguish'd be my grave ;
But there at eve may some congenial soul
Duly resort, and shed a pious tear,
The good man's benison—no more I ask.
And, oh ! (if heavenly beings may look down
From where, with cherubim, inspired they sit,
Upon this little dim-discover'd spot, 30
The earth), then will I cast a glance below
On him who thus my ashes shall embalm ;
And I will weep too, and will bless the wanderer,
Wishing he may not long be doom'd to pine
In this low-thoughted world of darkling woe,
But that, ere long, he reach his kindred skies.

Yet 'twas a silly thought, as if the body,
Mouldering beneath the surface of the earth,
Could taste the sweets of summer scenery,
And feel the freshness of the balmy breeze ! 40
Yet nature speaks within the human bosom,
And, spite of reason, bids it look beyond
His narrow verge of being, and provide
A decent residence for its clayey shell,
Endear'd to it by time. And who would lay

His body in the city burial-place, 46
To be thrown up again by some rude sexton,
And yield its narrow house another tenant,
Ere the moist flesh had mingled with the dust,
Ere the tenacious hair had left the scalp,
Exposed to insult lewd, and wantonness ?
No, I will lay me in the village ground ;
There are the dead respected. The poor hind,
Unletter'd as he is, would scorn to invade
The silent resting-place of death. I've seen
The labourer, returning from his toil,
Here stay his steps, and call his children round,
And slowly spell the rudely sculptured rhymes,
And, in his rustic manner, moralise.
I've mark'd with what a silent awe he'd spoken, 60
With head uncover'd, his respectful manner,
And all the honours which he paid the grave,
And thought on cities, where e'en cemeteries,
Bestrew'd with all the emblems of mortality,
Are not protected from the drunken insolence
Of wassailers profane, and wanton havoc.
Grant, Heaven, that here my pilgrimage may close !
Yet, if this be denied, where'er my bones
May lie—or in the city's crowded bounds,
Or scatter'd wide o'er the huge sweep of waters, 70
Or left a prey on some deserted shore
To the rapacious cormorant,—yet still,
(For why should sober reason cast away
A thought which soothes the soul ?) yet still my spirit
Shall wing its way to these my native regions,
And hover o'er this spot. Oh, then I'll think
Of times when I was seated 'neath this yew
In solemn rumination ; and will smile
With joy that I have got my long'd release.

VERSES.

- 1 THOU base repiner at another's joy,
 Whose eye turns green at merit not thine own,
 Oh, far away from generous Britons fly,
 And find in meaner climes a fitter throne.
 Away, away, it shall not be,
 Thou shalt not dare defile our plains;
 The truly generous heart disdains
 Thy meaner, lowlier fires, while he
 Joys at another's joy, and smiles at other's jollity.

- 2 Triumphant monster! though thy schemes succeed—
 Schemes laid in Acheron, the brood of night,
 Yet, but a little while, and nobly freed,
 Thy happy victim will emerge to light;
 When o'er his head in silence that reposes
 Some kindred soul shall come to drop a tear;
 Then will his last cold pillow turn to roses,
 Which thou hadst planted with the thorn severe;
 Then will thy baseness stand confess'd, and all
 Will curse the ungenerous fate, that bade a poet fall.

- 3 Yet, ah! thy arrows are too keen, too sure:
 Couldst thou not pitch upon another prey?
 Alas! in robbing him thou robb'st the poor,
 Who only boast what thou wouldst take away.
 See the lone Bard at midnight study sitting,
 O'er his pale features streams his dying lamp;
 While o'er fond Fancy's pale perspective flitting,
 Successive forms their fleet ideas stamp.

Yet say, is bliss upon his brow impress'd ?

Does jocund Health in Thought's still mansion live ?
Lo, the cold dew's that on his temples rest,
That short quick sigh—their sad responses give.

4 And canst thou rob a poet of his song ;

Snatch from the bard his trivial meed of praise ?
Small are his gains, nor does he hold them long ;
Then leave, oh, leave him to enjoy his lays
While yet he lives—for to his merits just,
Though future ages join his fame to raise,
Will the loud trump awake his cold unheeding dust ?
.

LINES.

YES, my stray steps have wander'd, wander'd far
From thee, and long, heart-soothing Poesy !
And many a flower, which in the passing time
My heart hath register'd, nipp'd by the chill
Of undeserved neglect, hath shrunk and died.
Heart-soothing Poesy ! though thou hast ceased
To hover o'er the many-voicèd strings
Of my long silent lyre, yet thou canst still
Call the warm tear from its thrice hallow'd cell,
And with recalled images of bliss 10
Warm my reluctant heart. Yes, I would throw,
Once more would throw a quick and hurried hand
O'er the responding chords. It hath not ceased—
It cannot, will not cease ; the heavenly warmth
Plays round my heart, and mantles o'er my cheek ;
Still, though unbidden, plays. Fair Poesy !

The summer and the spring, the wind and rain, 17
Sunshine and storm, with various interchange,
Have mark'd full many a day, and week, and month,
Since by dark wood, or hamlet far retired,
Spell-struck, with thee I loiter'd. Sorceress !
I cannot burst thy bonds. It is but lift
Thy blue eyes to that deep-bespangled vault,
Wreath thy enchanted tresses round thine arm,
And mutter some obscure and charmèd rhyme,
And I could follow thee, on thy night's work,
Up to the regions of thrice-chasten'd fire,
Or, in the caverns of the ocean flood,
Thrid the light mazes of thy volant foot.
Yet other duties call me, and mine ear 30
Must turn away from the high minstrelsy
Of thy soul-trancing harp, unwillingly
Must turn away ; there are severer strains
(And surely they are sweet as ever smote
The ear of spirit, from this mortal coil
Released and disembodied), there are strains
Forbid to all, save those whom solemn thought,
Through the probation of revolving years,
And mighty converse with the spirit of truth,
Have purged and purified. To these my soul 40
Aspireth ; and to this sublimer end
I gird myself, and climb the toilsome steep
With patient expectation. Yea, sometimes
Foretaste of bliss rewards me ; and sometimes
Spirits unseen upon my footsteps wait,
And minister strange music, which doth seem
Now near, now distant, now on high, now low,
Then swelling from all sides, with bliss complete,
And full fruition filling all the soul.
Surely such ministry, though rare, may soothe 50

The steep ascent, and cheat the lassitude 51
 Of toil ; and but that my fond heart
 Reverts to day-dreams of the summer gone,
 When by clear fountain, or embowerèd brake,
 I lay a listless muser, prizing, far
 Above all other lore, the poet's theme ;
 But for such recollections I could brace
 My stubborn spirit for the arduous path
 Of science unregretting ; eye afar
 Philosophy upon her steepest height, 60
 And with bold step and resolute attempt
 Pursue her to the innermost recess,
 Where throned in light she sits, the Queen of Truth.

THE PROSTITUTE.

DACTYLICS.

- 1 WOMAN of weeping eye, ah ! for thy wretched lot,
 Putting on smiles to lure the lewd passenger,
 Smiling while anguish gnaws at thy heavy heart ;
- 2 Sad is thy chance, thou daughter of misery,
 Vice and disease are wearing thee fast away,
 While the unfeeling ones sport with thy sufferings.
- 3 Destined to pamper the vicious one's appetite ;
 Spurn'd by the beings who lured thee from innocence ;
 Sinking unnoticed in sorrow and indigence ;

- 4 Thou hast no friends, for they with thy virtue fled ;
Thou art an outcast from house and from happiness ;
Wandering alone on the wide world's unfeeling stage !
- 5 Daughter of misery, sad is thy prospect here ;
Thou hast no friend to soothe down the bed of death ;
None after thee inquires with solicitude ;
- 6 Famine and fell disease shortly will wear thee down,
Yet thou hast still to brave often the winter's wind,
Loathsome to those thou wouldst court with thine
hollow eyes.
- 7 Soon thou wilt sink into death's silent slumbering,
And not a tear shall fall on thy early grave,
Nor shall a single stone tell where thy bones are laid.
- 8 Once wert thou happy—thou wert once innocent :
But the seducer beguiled thee in artlessness,
Then he abandoned thee unto thine infamy.
- 9 Now he perhaps is reclined on a bed of down :
But if a wretch like him sleeps in security,
God of the red right arm ! where is thy thunderbolt ?
-

ODES.

TO MY LYRE.

- 1 THOU simple Lyre ! thy music wild
Has served to charm the weary hour,
And many a lonely night has 'guiled,
When even pain has own'd, and smiled,
Its fascinating power.
- 2 Yet, oh my Lyre ! the busy crowd
Will little heed thy simple tones ;
Them mightier minstrels harping loud
Engross, and thou and I must shroud
Where dark oblivion 'thrones.
- 3 No hand, thy diapason o'er,
Well skill'd I throw with sweep sublime ;
For me, no academic lore
Has taught the solemn strain to pour,
Or build the polish'd rhyme.
- 4 Yet thou to sylvan themes canst soar ;
Thou know'st to charm the woodland train ;
The rustic swains believe thy power
Can hush the wild winds when they roar,
And still the billowy main.

- 5 These honours, Lyre, we yet may keep,
I, still unknown, may live with thee,
And gentle zephyr's wing will sweep
Thy solemn string, where low I sleep,
Beneath the alder-tree.
- 6 This little dirge will please me more
Than the full requiem's swelling peal ;
I'd rather than that crowds should sigh
For me, that from some kindred eye
The trickling tear should steal.
- 7 Yet dear to me the wreath of bay,
Perhaps from me debarr'd ;
And dear to me the classic zone,
Which, snatch'd from learning's labour'd throne,
Adorns the accepted bard.
- 8 And oh ! if yet 'twere mine to dwell
Where Cam or Isis winds along,
Perchance, inspired with ardour chaste,
I yet might call the ear of taste
To listen to my song.
- 9 Oh ! then, my little friend, thy style
I'd change to happier lays,
Oh ! then the cloister'd glooms should smile,
And through the long, the fretted aisle
Should swell the note of praise.
-

TO AN EARLY PRIMROSE.

- 1 MILD offspring of a dark and sullen sire !
Whose modest form, so delicately fine,
Was nursed in whirling storms,
And cradled in the winds,
 - 2 Thee, when young spring first question'd winter's sway,
And dared the sturdy blusterer to the fight,
Thee on this bank he threw,
To mark his victory.
 - 3 In this low vale, the promise of the year,
Serene thou openest to the nipping gale,
Unnoticed and alone,
Thy tender elegance.
 - 4 So virtue blooms, brought forth amid the storms
Of chill adversity, in some lone walk
Of life she rears her head,
Obscure and unobserved ;
 - 5 While every bleaching breeze that on her blows
Chastens her spotless purity of breast,
And hardens her to bear
Serene the ills of life.
-

ADDRESSED TO H. FUSELI, ESQ., R.A.

ON SEEING ENGRAVINGS FROM HIS DESIGNS.

MIGHTY magician ! who on Torneo's brow,
 When sullen tempests wrap the throne of night,
 Art wont to sit and catch the gleam of light
 That shoots athwart the gloom opaque below ;
 And listen to the distant death-shriek long
 From lonely mariner foundering in the deep,
 Which rises slowly up the rocky steep,
 While the Weird Sisters weave the horrid song :
 Or when along the liquid sky
 Serenely chant the orbs on high, 10
 Dost love to sit in musing trance,
 And mark the northern meteor's dance,
 (While far below the fitful oar
 Flings its faint pauses on the steepy shore),
 And list the music of the breeze,
 That sweeps by fits the bending seas ;
 And often bears with sudden swell
 The shipwreck'd sailor's funeral knell,
 By the spirits sung, who keep
 Their night-watch on the treacherous deep, 20
 And guide the wakeful helmsman's eye
 To Helice in northern sky ;
 And there upon the rock reclined
 With mighty visions fill'st the mind,
 Such as bound in magic spell
 Him¹ who grasp'd the gates of Hell,
 And bursting Pluto's dark domain,
 Held to the day the terrors of his reign.

¹ Dante.

Genius of horror and romantic awe, 29
Whose eye explores the secrets of the deep,
Whose power can bid the rebel fluids creep,
Can force the inmost soul to own its law !
Who shall now, sublimest spirit !
Who shall now thy wand inherit,
From him¹ thy darling child who best
Thy shuddering images express'd ?
Sullen of soul, and stern, and proud,
His gloomy spirit spurn'd the crowd,
And now he lays his aching head
In the dark mansion of the silent dead. 40

Mighty magician ! long thy wand has lain
Buried beneath the unfathomable deep ;
And oh ! for ever must its efforts sleep,
May none the mystic sceptre e'er regain ?
Oh, yes, 'tis his ! Thy other son !
He throws thy dark-wrought tunic on,
Fuesslin waves thy wand,—again they rise,
Again thy wildering forms salute our ravish'd eyes.
Him didst thou cradle on the dizzy steep,
Where round his head the vollied lightnings flung, 50
And the loud winds that round his pillow rung
Woo'd the stern infant to the arms of sleep.
Or on the highest top of Teneriffe
Seated the fearless boy, and bade him look
Where far below the weatherbeaten skiff
On the gulf-bottom of the ocean strook.
Thou mark'dst him drink with ruthless ear
The death-sob, and, disdaining rest,
Thou saw'st how danger fired his breast,
And in his young hand couch'd the visionary spear. 60

¹ Dante.

Then, Superstition, at thy call, 61
She bore the boy to Odin's Hall,
And set before his awe-struck sight
The savage feast and spectred fight ;
And summon'd from his mountain tomb
The ghastly warrior-son of gloom,
His fabled Runic rhymes to sing,
While fierce Hresvelger flapp'd his wing ;
Thou show'dst the trains the shepherd sees,
Laid on the stormy Hebrides, 70
Which on the mists of evening gleam,
Or crowd the foaming desert stream ;
Lastly her storied hand she waves,
And lays him in Florentian caves ;
There milder fables, lovelier themes,
Enwrap his soul in heavenly dreams,
There Pity's lute arrests his ear,
And draws the half-reluctant tear ;
And now at noon of night he roves
Along the embowering moonlight groves, 80
And as from many a cavern'd dell
The hollow wind is heard to swell,
He thinks some troubled spirit sighs,
And as upon the turf he lies,
Where sleeps the silent beam of night,
He sees below the gliding sprite,
And hears in Fancy's organs sound
Aërial music warbling round.

Taste lastly comes and smoothes the whole,
And breathes her polish o'er his soul ; 90
Glowing with wild, yet chasten'd heat,
The wondrous work is now complete.

The Poet dreams : the shadow flies, 93
 And fainting fast its image dies.
 But lo ! the Painter's magic force
 Arrests the phantom's fleeting course ;
 It lives—it lives—the canvas glows,
 And tenfold vigour o'er it flows.
 The Bard beholds the work achieved,
 And as he sees the shadow rise 100
 Sublime before his wondering eyes,
 Starts at the image his own mind conceived.

TO THE EARL OF CARLISLE, K.G.

I.—1.

RETIRED, remote from human noise,
 An humble Poet dwelt serene ;
 His lot was lowly, yet his joys
 Were manifold, I ween.
 He laid him by the brawling brook
 At eventide to ruminate,
 He watch'd the swallow skimming round,
 And mused in reverie profound,
 On wayward man's unhappy state,
 And ponder'd much, and paused on deeds of ancient date.

II.—1.

'Oh, 'twas not always thus,' he cried,
 'There was a time, when genius claim'd
 Respect from even towering pride,
 Nor hung her head ashamed :
 But now to wealth alone we bow,
 The titled and the rich alone

Are honour'd, while meek merit pines,
 On penury's wretched couch reclines,
 Unheeded in his dying moan,
 As, overwhelm'd with want and woe, he sinks unknown.

III.—1.

' Yet was the Muse not always seen
 In poverty's dejected mien,
 Not always did repining rue,
 And misery her steps pursue.
 Time was, when nobles thought their titles graced
 By the sweet honours of poetic bays,
 When Sidney sung his melting song,
 When Sheffield join'd the harmonious throng,
 And Lyttelton attuned to love his lays.
 Those days are gone—alas, for ever gone !
 No more our nobles love to grace
 Their brows with anadems, by genius won,
 But arrogantly deem the Muse as base ;
 How differently thought the sires of this degenerate
 race !'

I.—2.

Thus sang the minstrel ;—still at eve
 The upland woody shades among
 In broken measures did he grieve,
 With solitary song.
 And still his shame was aye the same,
 Neglect had stung him to the core ;
 And he with pensive joy did love
 To seek the still congenial grove,
 And muse on all his sorrows o'er,
 And vow that he would join the abjured world no
 more.

II.—2.

But human vows, how frail they be !
Fame brought Carlisle unto his view,
And all amazed, he thought to see
The Augustan age anew.
Fill'd with wild rapture, up he rose,
No more he ponders on the woes
Which erst he felt that forward goes,
Regrets he'd sunk in impotence,
And hails the ideal day of virtuous eminence.

III.—2.

Ah ! silly man, yet smarting sore
With ills which in the world he bore,
Again on futile hope to rest,
An unsubstantial prop at best,
And not to know one swallow makes no summer !
Ah ! soon he'll find the brilliant gleam,
Which flash'd across the hemisphere,
Illumining the darkness there,
Was but a single solitary beam,
While all around remain'd in custom'd night.
Still leaden Ignorance reigns serene
In the false court's delusive height,
And only one Carlisle is seen
To illume the heavy gloom with pure and steady light.

TO CONTEMPLATION.

Come, pensive sage, who lov'st to dwell
In some retired Lapponian cell,
Where, far from noise and riot rude,
Resides sequester'd solitude ;

Come, and o'er my longing soul
Throw thy dark and russet stole,
And open to my duteous eyes
The volume of thy mysteries. 5

I will meet thee on the hill,
Where, with printless footsteps still, 10
The Morning in her buskin gray
Springs upon her eastern way ;
While the frolic zephyrs stir,
Playing with the gossamer,
And, on ruder pinions borne,
Shake the dew-drops from the thorn.
There, as o'er the fields we pass,
Brushing with hasty feet the grass,
We will startle from her nest
The lively lark with speckled breast, 20
And hear the floating clouds among
Her gale-transported matin song,
Or on the upland stile, embower'd
With fragrant hawthorn snowy flower'd,
Will sauntering sit, and listen still
To the herdsman's oaten quill,
Wafted from the plain below ;
Or the heifer's frequent low ;
Or the milkmaid in the grove,
Singing of one that died for love. 30
Or when the noontide heats oppress,
We will seek the dark recess,
Where, in the embower'd translucent stream,
The cattle shun the sultry beam,
And o'er us on the marge reclined,
The drowsy fly her horn shall wind,
While Echo, from her ancient oak,
Shall answer to the woodman's stroke ;

Or the little peasant's song,
 Wandering lone the glens among,
 His artless lip with berries dyed,
 And feet through ragged shoes descried.

39

But oh ! when evening's virgin queen
 Sits on her fringed throne serene,
 And mingling whispers rising near
 Steal on the still reposing ear ;

While distant brooks decaying round,
 Augment the mix'd dissolving sound,
 And the zephyr flitting by

Whispers mystic harmony,

50

We will seek the woody lane,

By the hamlet, on the plain,

Where the weary rustic nigh

Shall whistle his wild melody,

And the croaking wicket oft

Shall echo from the neighbouring croft ;

And as we trace the green path lone,

With moss and rank weeds overgrown,

We will muse on pensive lore,

Till the full soul, brimming o'er,

60

Shall in our upturn'd eyes appear,

Embodied in a quivering tear.

Or else, serenely silent, set

By the brawling rivulet,

Which on its calm unruffled breast

Rears the old mossy arch impress'd,

That clasps its secret stream of glass,

Half hid in shrubs and waving grass,

The wood-nymph's lone secure retreat,

Unpress'd by fawn or sylvan's feet,

70

We'll watch in eve's ethereal braid

The rich vermilion slowly fade :

Or catch, faint twinkling from afar, 73
The first glimpse of the eastern star,
Fair Vesper, mildest lamp of light,
That heralds in imperial night :
Meanwhile, upon our wondering ear
Shall rise, though low, yet sweetly clear,
The distant sounds of pastoral lute,
Invoking soft the sober suit 80
Of dimmest darkness—fitting well
With love, or sorrow's pensive spell,
(So erst did music's silver tone
Wake slumbering Chaos on his throne).
And haply then, with sudden swell,
Shall roar the distant curfew bell,
While in the castle's mouldering tower
The hooting owl is heard to pour
Her melancholy song, and scare
Dull silence brooding in the air. 90
Meanwhile her dusk and slumbering car
Black-suited Night drives on from far,
And Cynthia, 'merging from her rear,
Arrests the waxing darkness drear,
And summons to her silent call,
Sweeping, in their airy pall,
The unshrived ghosts, in fairy trance,
To join her moonshine morrice-dance ;
While around the mystic ring
The shadowy shapes elastic spring, 100
Then with a passing shriek they fly,
Wrapp'd in mists, along the sky,
And oft are by the shepherd seen
In his lone night-watch on the green.
Then, hermit, let us turn our feet
To the low abbey's still retreat,

Embower'd in the distant glen, 107
Far from the haunts of busy men,
Where, as we sit upon the tomb,
The glowworm's light may gild the gloom,
And show to fancy's saddest eye
Where some lost hero's ashes lie.
And oh, as through the mouldering arch,
With ivy fill'd and weeping larch,
The night gale whispers sadly clear,
Speaking dear things to fancy's ear,
We'll hold communion with the shade
Of some deep wailing, ruin'd maid ;
Or call the ghost of Spenser down, 120
To tell of woe and fortune's frown,
And bid us cast the eye of hope
Beyond this bad world's narrow scope.
Or if these joys, to us denied,
To linger by the forest's side ;
Or in the meadow, or the wood,
Or by the lone, romantic flood ;
Let us in the busy town,
When sleep's dull streams the people drown,
Far from drowsy pillows flee,
And turn the church's massy key ; 130
Then, as through the painted glass
The moon's faint beams obscurely pass,
And darkly on the trophied wall
Her faint, ambiguous shadows fall,
Let us, while the faint winds wail
Through the long reluctant aisle,
As we pace with reverence meet,
Count the echoings of our feet ;
While from the tombs, with confess'd breath,
Distinct responds the voice of death. 140

If thou, mild sage, wilt condescend 141
 Thus on my footsteps to attend,
 To thee my lonely lamp shall burn
 By fallen Genius' sainted urn,
 As o'er the scroll of Time I pore,
 And sagely spell of ancient lore,
 Till I can rightly guess of all
 That Plato could to memory call,
 And scan the formless views of things ;
 Or, with old Egypt's fetter'd kings, 150
 Arrange the mystic trains that shine
 In night's high philosophic mine ;
 And to thy name shall e'er belong
 The honours of undying song.

TO THE GENIUS OF ROMANCE.

OH ! thou who, in my early youth,
 When fancy wore the garb of truth,
 Wert wont to win my infant feet
 To some retired, deep-fabled seat,
 Where, by the brooklet's secret tide,
 The midnight ghost was known to glide ;
 Or lay me in some lonely glade,
 In native Sherwood's forest shade,
 Where Robin Hood, the outlaw bold,
 Was wont his sylvan courts to hold ; 10
 And there, as musing deep I lay,
 Would steal my little soul away,
 And all my pictures represent
 Of siege and solemn tournament ;
 Or bear me to the magic scene,
 Where, clad in greaves and gabardine,

The warrior knight of chivalry 17
 Made many a fierce enchanter flee,
 And bore the high-born dame away,
 Long held the fell magician's prey ;
 Or oft would tell the shuddering tale
 Of murders, and of goblins pale,
 Haunting the guilty baron's side
 (Whose floors with secret blood were dyed),
 Which o'er the vaulted corridor
 On stormy nights was heard to roar,
 By old domestic, waken'd wide
 By the angry winds that chide ;
 Or else the mystic tale would tell
 Of Greensleeve, or of Blue-Beard fell. 30

.

TO MIDNIGHT.

- 1 SEASON of general rest, whose solemn still
 Strikes to the trembling heart a fearful chill,
 But speaks to philosophic souls delight ;
 Thee do I hail, as at my casement high,
 My candle waning melancholy by,
 I sit and taste the holy calm of night.

- 2 Yon pensive orb, that through the ether sails,
 And gilds the misty shadows of the vales,
 Hanging in thy dull rear her vestal flame ;
 To her, while all around in sleep recline,
 Wakeful I raise my orisons divine,
 And sing the gentle honours of her name ;

- 3 While Fancy lone o'er me, her votary, bends,
 To lift my soul her fairy visions sends,
 And pours upon my ear her thrilling song,
 And Superstition's gentle terrors come,—
 See, see yon dim ghost gliding through the gloom!
 See round yon churchyard elm what spectres throng!
- 4 Meanwhile I tune, to some romantic lay,
 My flageolet, and as I pensive play,
 The sweet notes echo o'er the mountain scene:
 The traveller, late journeying o'er the moors,
 Hears them aghast,—(while still the dull owl pours
 Her hollow screams each dreary pause between),
- 5 Till in the lonely tower he spies the light,
 Now faintly flashing on the glooms of night,
 Where I, poor muser, my lone vigils keep,
 And, 'mid the dreary solitude serene,
 Cast a much-meaning glance upon the scene,
 And raise my mournful eye to Heaven, and weep.

TO THOUGHT.

WRITTEN AT MIDNIGHT.

- 1 HENCE, away, vindictive Thought;
 Thy pictures are of pain;
 The visions through thy dark eye caught,
 They with no gentle charms are fraught,
 So pr'ythee back again.
 I would not weep,
 I wish to sleep,
 Then why, thou busy foe, with me thy vigils keep?

2 Why dost o'er bed and couch recline ?

Is this thy new delight ?

Pale visitant, it is not thine

To keep thy sentry through the mine,

The dark vault of the night :

'Tis thine to die,

While o'er the eye

The dews of slumber press, and waking sorrows fly.

3 Go thou, and bide with him who guides

His bark through lonely seas ;

And as, reclining on his helm,

Sadly he marks the starry realm,

To him thou mayst bring ease :

But thou to me

Art misery,

So pr'ythee, pr'ythee, plume thy wings, and from my
pillow flee.

4 And, Memory, pray what art thou ?

Art thou of pleasure born ?

Does bliss untainted from thee flow ?

The rose that gems thy pensive brow,

Is it without a thorn ?

With all thy smiles,

And witching wiles,

Yet not unfrequent bitterness thy mournful sway
defiles.

5 The drowsy night-watch has forgot

To call the solemn hour ;

Lull'd by the winds, he slumbers deep,

While I in vain, capricious Sleep,

Invoke thy tardy power ;

And restless lie,
With unclosed eye,
And count the tedious hours as slow they minute by.

GENIUS.

I.—1.

MANY there be, who, through the vale of life,
With velvet pace, unnoticed, softly go,
While jarring discord's inharmonious strife
Awakes them not to woe.
By them unheeded, carking care,
Green-eyed grief, and dull despair ;
Smoothly they pursue their way,
With even tenor and with equal breath,
Alike through cloudy and through sunny day,
Then sink in peace to death.

II.—1.

But, ah ! a few there be whom griefs devour,
And weeping woe, and disappointment keen,
Repining penury, and sorrow sour,
And self-consuming spleen.
And these are Genius' favourites : these
Know the thought-throned mind to please,
And from her fleshy seat to draw
To realms where fancy's golden orbits roll,
Disdaining all but 'wilderer rapture's law,
The captivated soul.

III.—1.

Genius, from thy starry throne,
High above the burning zone,

In radiant robe of light array'd,
Oh ! hear the plaint by thy sad favourite made,
His melancholy moan.
He tells of scorn, he tells of broken vows,
Of sleepless nights, of anguish-ridden days,
Pangs that his sensibility uprouse
To curse his being and his thirst for praise.
Thou gav'st to him with treble force to feel
The sting of keen neglect, the rich man's scorn,
And what o'er all does in his soul preside
Predominant, and tempers him to steel,
His high indignant pride.

I.—2.

Lament not ye, who humbly steal through life,
That Genius visits not your lowly shed ;
For, ah, what woes and sorrows ever rife
Distract his hapless head !
For him awaits no balmy sleep,
He wakes all night, and wakes to weep ;
Or by his lonely lamp he sits
At solemn midnight, when the peasant
sleeps,
In feverish study, and in moody fits
His mournful vigils keeps.

II.—2.

And, oh ! for what consumes his watchful oil ?
For what does thus he waste life's fleeting
breath ?
'Tis for neglect and penury he doth toil,
'Tis for untimely death.
Lo ! where dejected pale he lies,
Despair depicted in his eyes,

He feels the vital flame decrease,
He sees the grave wide yawning for its prey,
Without a friend to soothe his soul to peace,
And cheer the expiring ray.

III.—2.

By Sulmo's bard of mournful fame,
By gentle Otway's magic name,
By him, the youth, who smiled at death,
And rashly dared to stop his vital breath,
Will I thy pangs proclaim ;
For still to misery closely thou'rt allied,
Though gaudy pageants glitter by thy side,
And far-resounding Fame.
What though to thee the dazzled millions bow,
And to thy posthumous merit bend them low ;
Though unto thee the monarch looks with awe,
And thou at thy flash'd car dost nations draw,
Yet, ah ! unseen behind thee fly
Corroding Anguish, soul-subduing Pain,
And Discontent that clouds the fairest sky,
A melancholy train.
Yes, Genius, thee a thousand cares await,
Mocking thy derided state ;
Thee chill Adversity will still attend,
Before whose face flies fast the summer's friend
And leaves thee all forlorn ;
While leaden Ignorance rears her head and laughs,
And fat Stupidity shakes his jolly sides,
And while the cup of affluence he quaffs
With bee-eyed Wisdom, Genius derides,
Who toils, and every hardship doth outbrave,
To gain the meed of praise when he is mouldering in
his grave.

FRAGMENT OF AN ODE TO THE MOON.

- 1 MILD orb, who floatest through the realm of night,
 A pathless wanderer o'er a lonely wild,
 Welcome to me thy soft and pensive light,
 Which oft in childhood my lone thoughts beguiled.
 Now doubly dear as o'er my silent seat,
 Nocturnal study's still retreat,
 It casts a mournful melancholy gleam,
 And through my lofty casement weaves,
 Dim through the vine's encircling leaves,
 An intermingled beam.
- 2 These feverish dews that on my temples hang,
 This quivering lip, these eyes of dying flame ;
 These the dread signs of many a secret pang,
 These are the meed of him who pants for fame !
 Pale Moon, from thoughts like these divert my soul ;
 Lowly I kneel before thy shrine on high ;
 My lamp expires ;—beneath thy mild control
 These restless dreams are ever wont to fly.
- 3 Come, kindred mourner, in my breast
 Soothe these discordant tones to rest,
 And breathe the soul of peace ;
 Mild visitor, I feel thee here,
 It is not pain that brings this tear,
 For thou hast bid it cease.
 Oh ! many a year has pass'd away
 Since I, beneath thy fairy ray,
 Attuned my infant reed ;
 When wilt thou, Time, those days restore,
 Those happy moments now no more—

.

- 4 When on the lake's damp marge I lay,
 And mark'd the northern meteor's dance,
 Bland Hope and Fancy, ye were there
 To inspire my trance.
 Twin sisters, faintly now ye deign
 Your magic sweets on me to shed,
 In vain your powers are now essay'd
 To chase superior pain.

- 5 And art thou fled, thou welcome orb !
 So swiftly pleasure flies,
 So to mankind, in darkness lost,
 The beam of ardour dies.
 Wan Moon, thy nightly task is done,
 And now, encurtain'd in the main,
 Thou sinkest into rest ;
 But I, in vain, on thorny bed
 Shall woo the god of soft repose—

.

TO THE MUSE.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF FOURTEEN.

- 1 ILL-FATED maid, in whose unhappy train
 Chill poverty and misery are seen,
 Anguish and discontent, the unhappy bane
 Of life, and blackener of each brighter scene.
 Why to thy votaries dost thou give to feel
 So keenly all the scorns—the jeers of life ?
 Why not endow them to endure the strife
 With apathy's invulnerable steel,
 Of self-content and ease, each torturing wound to heal ?

2 Ah ! who would taste your self-deluding joys,
That lure the unwary to a wretched doom,

That bid fair views and flattering hopes arise,
Then hurl them headlong to a lasting tomb ?

What is the charm which leads thy victims on
To persevere in paths that lead to woe ?

What can induce them in that route to go,

In which innumerable before have gone,

And died in misery, poor and woe-begone ?

3 Yet can I ask what charms in thee are found ;
I, who have drunk from thine ethereal rill,

And tasted all the pleasures that abound

Upon Parnassus, loved Aonian hill ?

I, through whose soul the Muses' strains aye thrill !

Oh ! I do feel the spell with which I'm tied ;

And though our annals fearful stories tell,
How Savage languish'd, and how Otway died,
Yet must I persevere, let whate'er will betide.

TO LOVE.

1 WHY should I blush to own I love ?

'Tis love that rules the realms above.

Why should I blush to say to all,

That virtue holds my heart in thrall ?

2 Why should I seek the thickest shade,
Lest Love's dear secret be betray'd ?

Why the stern brow deceitful move,

When I am languishing with love ?

- 3 Is it weakness thus to dwell
On passion that I dare not tell?
Such weakness I would ever prove;
'Tis painful, though 'tis sweet to love.
-

ON WHIT-MONDAY.

- 1 HARK! how the merry bells ring jocund round,
And now they die upon the veering breeze;
Anon they thunder loud
Full on the musing ear.
- 2 Wafted in varying cadence, by the shore
Of the still twinkling river, they bespeak
A day of jubilee,
An ancient holiday.
- 3 And lo! the rural revels are begun,
And gaily echoing to the laughing sky,
On the smooth shaven green
Resounds the voice of Mirth.
- 4 Alas! regardless of the tongue of Fate,
That tells them 'tis but as an hour since they,
Who now are in their graves,
Kept up the Whitsun dance;
- 5 And that another hour, and they must fall
Like those who went before, and sleep as still
Beneath the silent sod,
A cold and cheerless sleep.

- 6 Yet why should thoughts like these intrude to scare
The vagrant Happiness, when she will deign
To smile upon us here,
A transient visitor ?
- 7 Mortals ! be gladsome while ye have the power,
And laugh and seize the glittering lapse of joy ;
In time the bell will toll
That warns ye to your graves.
- 8 I to the woodland solitude will bend
My lonesome way—where Mirth's obstreperous shout
Shall not intrude to break
The meditative hour.
- 9 There will I ponder on the state of man,
Joyless and sad of heart, and consecrate
This day of jubilee
To sad reflection's shrine ;
- 10 And I will cast my fond eye far beyond
This world of care, to where the steeple loud
Shall rock above the sod,
Where I shall sleep in peace.
-

TO THE WIND, AT MIDNIGHT.

- 1 Not unfamiliar to mine ear,
Blasts of the night ! ye howl, as now
My shuddering casement loud
With fitful force ye beat.

- 2 Mine ear has dwelt in silent awe,
 The howling sweep, the sudden rush ;
 And when the passing gale
 Pour'd deep the hollow dirge.

TO THE HARVEST MOON.

*Cum ruit imbriferum ver :
 Spicea jam campis cum messis inhorruit, et cum
 Frumenta in viridi stipula lactentia turgent :
 Cuncta tibi Cererem pubes agrestis adoret.*

VIRGIL.

- 1 MOON of Harvest, herald mild
 Of plenty, rustic labour's child,
 Hail! oh hail! I greet thy beam,
 As soft it trembles o'er the stream,
 And gilds the straw-thatch'd hamlet wide,
 Where Innocence and Peace reside!
 'Tis thou that glad'st with joy the rustic throng,
 Promptest the tripping dance, th' exhilarating song.

- 2 Moon of Harvest, I do love
 O'er the uplands now to rove,
 While thy modest ray serene
 Gilds the wide surrounding scene ;
 And to watch thee riding high
 In the blue vault of the sky,
 Where no thin vapour intercepts thy ray,
 But in unclouded majesty thou walkest on thy way.

*

- 3 Pleasing 'tis, O modest moon!
 Now the night is at her noon,

'Neath thy sway to musing lie,
While around the zephyrs sigh,
Fanning soft the sun-tann'd wheat,
Ripen'd by the summer's heat ;
Picturing all the rustic's joy
When boundless plenty greets his eye,
 And thinking soon,
 O modest Moon !
How many a female eye will roam
 Along the road,
 To see the load,
The last dear load of harvest home.

4 Storms and tempests, floods and rains,
Stern despoilers of the plains,
Hence, away, the season flee,
Foes to light-heart jollity :
May no winds careering high
Drive the clouds along the sky,
But may all nature smile with aspect boon,
When in the heavens thou show'st thy face, O Harvest Moon !

5 'Neath yon lowly roof he lies,
The husbandman, with sleep-seal'd eyes ;
He dreams of crowded barns, and round
The yard he hears the flail resound ;
Oh ! may no hurricane destroy
His visionary views of joy !
God of the winds ! oh, hear his humble prayer,
And while the Moon of Harvest shines, thy blustering
whirlwind spare.

6 Sons of luxury, to you
Leave I sleep's dull power to woo ;

Press ye still the downy bed,
 While feverish dreams surround your head ;
 I will seek the woodland glade,
 Penetrate the thickest shade,
 Wrapp'd in contemplation's dreams,
 Musing high on holy themes,
 While on the gale
 Shall softly sail
 The nightingale's enchanting tune,
 And oft my eyes
 Shall grateful rise
 To thee, the modest Harvest Moon !

TO THE HERB ROSEMARY.¹

1 SWEET scented flower ! who art wont to bloom
 On January's front severe,
 And o'er the wintry desert drear
 To waft thy waste perfume !
 Come, thou shalt form my nosegay now,
 And I will bind thee round my brow ;
 And as I twine the mournful wreath,
 I'll weave a melancholy song ;
 And sweet the strain shall be, and long,
 The melody of death.

2 Come, funeral flower ! who lov'st to dwell
 With the pale corse in lonely tomb,
 And throw across the desert gloom
 A sweet decaying smell,

¹ The Rosemary buds in January. It is the flower commonly put in the coffins of the dead.

Come, press my lips, and lie with me
Beneath the lowly alder-tree,
And we will sleep a pleasant sleep,
And not a care shall dare intrude
To break the marble solitude,
So peaceful and so deep.

- 3 And hark! the wind god, as he flies,
Moans hollow in the forest trees,
And sailing on the gusty breeze,
Mysterious music dies.
Sweet flower! that requiem wild is mine,
It warns me to the lonely shrine,
The cold turf altar of the dead:
My grave shall be in yon lone spot,
Where as I lie, by all forgot,
A dying fragrance thou wilt o'er my ashes shed.
-

TO THE MORNING.

WRITTEN DURING ILLNESS.

- 1 BEAMS of the daybreak faint! I hail
Your dubious hues, as on the robe
Of night, which wraps the slumbering globe,
I mark your traces pale.
Tired with the taper's sickly light,
And with the wearying, number'd night,
I hail the streaks of morn divine:
And lo! they break between the dewy wreaths
That round my rural casement twine;
The fresh gale o'er the green lawn breathes,

It fans my feverish brow, it calms the mental strife,
And cheerily relumes the lambent flame of life.

2 The lark has her gay song begun,
 She leaves her grassy nest,
And soars till the unrisen sun
 Gleams on her speckled breast.
Now let me leave my restless bed,
And o'er the spangled uplands tread ;
 Now through the 'custom'd wood-walk
 wend ;
By many a green lane lies my way,
 Where high o'er head the wild briers bend,
Till on the mountain's summit gray,
I sit me down, and mark the glorious dawn of day.

3 Oh Heaven ! the soft refreshing gale
 It breathes into my breast !
My sunk eye gleams ; my cheek, so pale,
 Is with new colours dress'd.

4 Blithe Health ! thou soul of life and ease !
Come thou, too, on the balmy breeze,
 Invigorate my frame :
I'll join with thee the buskin'd chase,
With thee the distant clime will trace
 Beyond those clouds of flame.

5 Above, below, what charms unfold
 In all the varied view !
Before me all is burnish'd gold,
 Behind the twilight's hue.
The mists which on old Night await,
Far to the west they hold their state,

They shun the clear blue face of Morn ;
Along the fine cerulean sky
The fleecy clouds successive fly,
While bright prismatic beams their shadowy folds adorn.

6 And hark ! the thatcher has begun
His whistle on the eaves,
And oft the hedger's bill is heard
Among the rustling leaves.
The slow team creaks upon the road,
The noisy whip resounds,
The driver's voice, his carol blithe,
The mower's stroke, his whetting scythe
Mix with the morning's sounds.

7 Who would not rather take his seat
Beneath these clumps of trees,
The early dawn of day to greet,
And catch the healthy breeze,
Than on the silken couch of sloth
Luxurious to lie ;
Who would not from life's dreary waste
Snatch, when he could, with eager haste,
An interval of joy !

8 To him who simply thus recounts
The morning's pleasures o'er,
Fate dooms, ere long, the scene must close
To ope on him no more.
Yet Morning ! unrepining still,
He 'll greet thy beams awhile ;
And surely thou, when o'er his grave
Solemn the whispering willows wave,
Wilt sweetly on him smile :

And the pale glowworm's pensive light
Will guide his ghostly walks in the drear moonless night.

ON DISAPPOINTMENT.

- 1 Come, Disappointment, come !
Not in thy terrors clad :
Come, in thy meekest, saddest guise ;
Thy chastening rod but terrifies
The restless and the bad.
But I recline
Beneath thy shrine,
And round my brow resign'd thy peaceful cypress twine.
- 2 Though Fancy flies away
Before thy hollow tread,
Yet Meditation, in her cell,
Hears with faint eye the lingering knell
That tells her hopes are dead ;
And though the tear
By chance appear,
Yet she can smile, and say, My all was not laid here.
- 3 Come, Disappointment, come !
Though from Hope's summit hurl'd,
Still, rigid nurse, thou art forgiven,
For thou severe wert sent from Heaven
To wean me from the world ;
To turn my eye
From vanity,
And point to scenes of bliss that never, never die.

- 4 What is this passing scene ?
A peevish April day !
A little sun—a little rain,
And then night sweeps along the plain,
And all things fade away.
Man (soon discuss'd)
Yields up his trust,
And all his hopes and fears lie with him in the
dust.
- 5 Oh, what is Beauty's power ?
It flourishes and dies ;
Will the cold earth its silence break,
To tell how soft, how smooth a cheek
Beneath its surface lies ?
Mute, mute is all
O'er Beauty's fall ;
Her praise resounds no more when mantled in her
pall.
- 6 The most beloved on earth
Not long survives to-day ;
So music past is obsolete,
And yet 'twas sweet, 'twas passing sweet,
But now 'tis gone away.
Thus does the shade
In memory fade,
When in forsaken tomb the form beloved is laid.
- 7 Then since this world is vain,
And volatile, and fleet,
Why should I lay up earthly joys,
Where rust corrupts, and moth destroys,
And cares and sorrows eat ?

Why fly from ill
 With anxious skill,
 When soon this hand will freeze, this throbbing heart
 be still?

8 Come, Disappointment, come !
 Thou art not stern to me ;
 Sad monitress ! I own thy sway,
 A votary sad in early day,
 I bend my knee to thee.
 From sun to sun
 My race will run,
 I only bow, and say, My God, thy will be done !

On another paper are a few lines, written probably in the freshness of his disappointment.

I dream no more—the vision flies away,
 And Disappointment
 There fell my hopes—I lost my all in this,
 My cherish'd all of visionary bliss.
 Now hope farewell, farewell all joys below ;
 Now welcome sorrow, and now welcome woe.
 Plunge me in glooms

ON THE DEATH OF DERMODY THE POET.

1 CHILD of Misfortune ! Offspring of the Muse !
 Mark like the meteor's gleam his mad career ;
 With hollow cheeks and haggard eye,
 Behold he shrieking passes by :
 I see, I see him near :
 That hollow scream, that deepening groan ;
 It rings upon mine ear.

- 2 Oh come, ye thoughtless, ye deluded youth,
Who clasp the syren Pleasure to your breast,
Behold the wreck of genius here,
And drop, oh drop the silent tear
For Dermody at rest !
His fate is yours, then from your loins
Tear quick the silken vest.
- 3 Saw'st thou his dying bed ? Saw'st thou his eye,
Once flashing fire, despair's dim tear distil ?
How ghastly did it seem !
And then his dying scream :
Oh God ! I hear it still :
It sounds upon my fainting sense,
It strikes with deathly chill.
- 4 Say, didst thou mark the brilliant poet's death ?
Saw'st thou an anxious father by his bed,
Or pitying friends around him stand :
Or didst thou see a mother's hand
Support his languid head ?
Oh ! none of these—no friend o'er him
The balm of pity shed.
- 5 Now come around, ye flippant sons of wealth,
Sarcastic smile on genius fallen low ;
Now come around who pant for fame,
And learn from hence, a poet's name
Is purchased but by woe :
And when ambition prompts to rise,
Oh ! think of him below.
- 6 For me, poor moraliser, I will run,
Dejected, to some solitary state :

The Muse has set her seal on me,
She set her seal on Dermody,
It is the seal of fate :
In some lone spot my bones may lie,
Secure from human hate.

7 Yet ere I go I'll drop one silent tear,
Where lies unwept the poet's fallen head :
May Peace her banners o'er him wave !
For me in my deserted grave
No friend a tear shall shed :
Yet may the lily and the rose
Bloom on my grassy bed !

SONNETS.

TO THE RIVER TRENT.

WRITTEN ON RECOVERY FROM SICKNESS.

ONCE more, O Trent ! along thy pebbly marge,
A pensive invalid, reduced and pale,
From the close sick-room newly set at large,
Woos to his wan, worn cheek the pleasant gale.
Oh ! to his ear how musical the tale
Which fills with joy the throstle's little throat !
And all the sounds which on the fresh breeze sail,
How wildly novel on his senses float !
It was on this that many a sleepless night,
As lone he watch'd the taper's sickly gleam,
And at his casement heard, with wild affright,
The owl's dull wing, and melancholy scream,
On this he thought ; this, this, his sole desire,
Thus once again to hear the warbling woodland choir.

SONNET.

GIVE me a cottage on some Cambrian wild,
Where far from cities I may spend my days ;
And, by the beauties of the scene beguiled,
May pity man's pursuits, and shun his ways.

While on the rock I mark the browsing goat,
List to the mountain-torrent's distant noise,
Or the hoarse bittern's solitary note,
I shall not want the world's delusive joys ;
But with my little scrip, my book, my lyre,
Shall think my lot complete, nor covet more ;
And when, with time, shall wane the vital fire,
I'll raise my pillow on the desert shore,
And lay me down to rest where the wild wave
Shall make sweet music o'er my lonely grave.

SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED BY
A FEMALE LUNATIC TO A LADY.¹

LADY, thou weepest for the maniac's woe,
And thou art fair, and thou, like me, art young ;
Oh ! may thy bosom never, never know
The pangs with which my wretched heart is wrung.
I had a mother once—a brother too—
(Beneath yon yew my father rests his head.)
I had a lover once,—and kind and true,
But mother, brother, lover, all are fled !
Yet, whence the tear which dims thy lovely eye ?
Oh ! gentle lady—not for me thus weep,
The green sod soon upon my breast will lie,
And soft and sound will be my peaceful sleep.
Go thou, and pluck the roses while they bloom—
My hopes lie buried in the silent tomb.

¹ This Quatorzain had its rise from an elegant Sonnet, 'Occasioned by seeing a young Female Lunatic,' written by Mrs Lofft, and published in the 'Monthly Mirror.'

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY THE UNHAPPY
POET DERMODY IN A STORM,

WHILE ON BOARD A SHIP IN HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE.

Lo ! o'er the welkin the tempestuous clouds
Successive fly, and the loud piping wind
Rocks the poor sea-boy on the dripping shrouds,
While the pale pilot, o'er the helm reclined,
Lists to the changeful storm : and as he plies
His wakeful task, he oft bethinks him, sad,
Of wife, and little home, and chubby lad,
And the half-strangled tear bedews his eyes ;
I, on the deck, musing on themes forlorn,
View the drear tempest, and the yawning deep,
Nought dreading in the green sea's caves to sleep,
For not for me shall wife or children mourn,
And the wild winds will ring my funeral knell,
Sweetly as solemn peal of pious passing-bell.

THE WINTER TRAVELLER.

God help thee, Traveller, on thy journey far ;
The wind is bitter keen,—the snow o'erlays
The hidden pits, and dangerous hollow ways,
And darkness will involve thee. No kind star
To-night will guide thee, Traveller, and the war
Of winds and elements on thy head will break,
And in thy agonising ear the shriek
Of spirits howling on their stormy car

Will often ring appalling ; I portend
 A dismal night, and on my wakeful bed
 Thoughts, Traveller, of thee will fill my head,
 And him who rides where wind and waves contend,
 And strives, rude cradled on the seas, to guide
 His lonely bark through the tempestuous tide.

SONNET.

BY CAPEL LOFFT, ESQ.

This Sonnet was addressed to the Author of this volume, and was occasioned by several little Quatorzains, misnomered Sonnets, which he published in the 'Monthly Mirror.' He begs leave to return his thanks to the much-respected writer, for the permission so politely granted to insert it here, and for the good opinion he has been pleased to express of his productions.

YE whose aspirings court the Muse of lays,
 ' Severest of those orders which belong,
 Distinct and separate, to Delphic song,'
 Why shun the sonnet's undulating maze ?
 And why its name, boast of Petrarchian days,
 Assume, its rules disown'd ? whom from the throng
 The Muse selects, their ear the charm obeys
 Of its full harmony ;—they fear to wrong
 The sonnet, by adorning with a name
 Of that distinguish'd import, lays, though sweet,
 Yet not in magic texture taught to meet
 Of that so varied and peculiar frame.
 O think ! to vindicate its genuine praise
 Those it beseems, whose lyre a favouring impulse sways.

RECANTATORY IN REPLY TO THE FORE-
GOING ELEGANT ADMONITION.

LET the sublimer Muse, who, wrapp'd in night,
Rides on the raven pennons of the storm ;
Or o'er the field, with purple havoc warm,
Lashes her steeds, and sings along the fight ;
Let her, whom more ferocious strains delight,
Disdain the plaintive sonnet's little form,
And scorn to its wild cadence to conform
The impetuous tenor of her hardy flight.
But me, far lowest of the sylvan train,
Who wake the wood-nymphs from the forest shade
With wildest song ;—me, much behoves the aid
Of mingled melody, to grace my strain,
And give it power to please, as soft it flows
Through the smooth murmurs of the frequent close.

SONNET ON HEARING THE SOUNDS OF AN
ÆOLIAN HARP.

So ravishingly soft upon the tide
Of the infuriate gust it did career,
It might have soothed its rugged charioteer,
And sunk him to a zephyr ; then it died,
Melting in melody ;—and I descried,
Borne to some wizard stream, the form appear
Of Druid sage, who on the far-off ear
Pour'd his lone song, to which the surge replied :

Or thought I heard the hapless pilgrim's knell,
Lost in some wild enchanted forest's bounds,
By unseen beings sung ; or are these sounds
Such as, 'tis said, at night are known to swell
By startled shepherd on the lonely heath,
Keeping his night-watch sad, portending death ?

SONNET.

WHAT art thou, Mighty One ! and where thy seat ?
Thou broodest on the calm that cheers the lands ;
And thou dost bear within thine awful hands
The rolling thunders and the lightnings fleet.
Stern on thy dark-wrought car of cloud and wind,
Thou guid'st the northern storm at night's dead noon,
Or, on the red wing of the fierce monsoon,
Disturb'st the sleeping giant of the Ind.
In the drear silence of the polar span
Dost thou repose ? or in the solitude
Of sultry tracts, where the lone caravan
Hears nightly howl the tiger's hungry brood ?
Vain thought ! the confines of his throne to trace,
Who glows through all the fields of boundless space.

TO CAPEL LOFFT, Esq.

LOFFT, unto thee one tributary song
The simple Muse, admiring, fain would bring ;
She longs to lisp thee to the listening throng,
And with thy name to bid the woodlands ring.

Fain would she blazon all thy virtues forth,
Thy warm philanthropy, thy justice mild ;
Would say how thou didst foster kindred worth,
And to thy bosom snatch'd Misfortune's child ;
Firm she would paint thee, with becoming zeal,
Upright, and learned, as the Pylian sire ;
Would say how sweetly thou couldst sweep the lyre,
And show thy labours for the public weal,
Ten thousand virtues tell with joys supreme—
But ah ! she shrinks abash'd before the arduous theme.

TO THE MOON.

WRITTEN IN NOVEMBER.

SUBLIME, emerging from the misty verge
Of the horizon dim, thee, Moon, I hail,
As, sweeping o'er the leafless grove, the gale
Seems to repeat the year's funereal dirge.
Now Autumn sickens on the languid sight,
And leaves bestrew the wanderer's lonely way,
Now unto thee, pale arbitress of night,
With double joy my homage do I pay.
When clouds disguise the glories of the day,
And stern November sheds her boisterous blight,
How doubly sweet to mark the moony ray
Shoot through the mist from the ethereal height,
And, still unchanged, back to the memory bring
The smiles Favonian of life's earliest spring.

WRITTEN AT THE GRAVE OF A FRIEND.

FAST from the west the fading day-streaks fly,
And ebon night assumes her solemn sway,
Yet here alone, unheeding time, I lie,
And o'er my friend still pour the plaintive lay.
Oh! 'tis not long since, George, with thee I woo'd
The maid of musings by yon moaning wave ;
And hail'd the moon's mild beam, which, now renew'd,
Seems sweetly sleeping on thy silent grave !
The busy world pursues its boisterous way,
The noise of revelry still echoes round,
Yet I am sad while all beside is gay ;
Yet still I weep o'er thy deserted mound.
Oh! that, like thee, I might bid sorrow cease,
And 'neath the greensward sleep the sleep of peace.

TO MISFORTUNE.

MISFORTUNE, I am young, my chin is bare,
And I have wonder'd much when men have told,
How youth was free from sorrow and from care,
That thou shouldst dwell with me, and leave the old.
Sure dost not like me! Shrivell'd hag of hate,
My phiz, and thanks to thee, is sadly long ;
I am not either, beldame, over strong ;
Nor do I wish at all to be thy mate,
For thou, sweet Fury, art my utter hate.
Nay, shake not thus thy miserable pate ;
I am yet young, and do not like thy face ;
And, lest thou shouldst resume the wild-goose chase,

I'll tell thee something all thy heat to assuage,
—Thou wilt not hit my fancy in my age.

SONNET.

As thus oppress'd with many a heavy care
(Though young yet sorrowful), I turn my feet
To the dark woodland, longing much to greet
The form of Peace, if chance she sojourn there ;
Deep thought and dismal, verging to despair,
Fills my sad breast ; and, tired with this vain coil,
I shrink dismay'd before life's upland toil ;
And as, amid the leaves, the evening air
Whispers still melody,—I think ere long,
When I no more can hear, these woods will speak ;
And then a sad smile plays upon my cheek,
And mournful phantasies upon me throng,
And I do ponder, with most strange delight,
On the calm slumbers of the dead man's night.

TO APRIL.

EMBLEM of life ! see changeful April sail
In varying vest along the shadowy skies,
Now bidding summer's softest zephyrs rise,
Anon recalling winter's stormy gale,
And pouring from the cloud her sudden hail ;
Then, smiling through the tear that dims her eyes,
While Iris with her braid the welkin dyes,
Promise of sunshine, not so prone to fail.
So, to us, sojourners in life's low vale,

The smiles of fortune flatter to deceive,
While still the Fates the web of misery weave.
So Hope exultant spreads her æry sail,
And from the present gloom the soul conveys
To distant summers and far happier days.

SONNET.

YE unseen spirits, whose wild melodies,
At evening rising slow, yet sweetly clear,
Steal on the musing poet's pensive ear,
As by the wood-spring stretch'd supine he lies ;
When he, who now invokes you, low is laid,
His tired frame resting on the earth's cold bed,
Hold ye your nightly vigils o'er his head,
And chant a dirge to his reposing shade !
For he was wont to love your madrigals ;
And often by the haunted stream, that laves
The dark sequester'd woodland's inmost caves,
Would sit and listen to the dying falls,
Till the full tear would quiver in his eye,
And his big heart would heave with mournful ecstasy.

TO A TAPER.

'Tis midnight. On the globe dead slumber sits,
And all is silence—in the hour of sleep ;
Save when the hollow gust, that swells by fits,
In the dark wood roars fearfully and deep.
I wake alone to listen and to weep,
To watch, my taper, thy pale beacon burn ;
And, as still Memory does her vigils keep,
To think of days that never can return.

By thy pale ray I raise my languid head,
My eye surveys the solitary gloom ;
And the sad meaning tear, unmix'd with dread,
Tells thou dost light me to the silent tomb.
Like thee I wane ;—like thine my life's last ray
Will fade in loneliness, unwept, away.

TO MY MOTHER.

AND canst thou, Mother, for a moment think
That we, thy children, when old age shall shed
Its blanching honours on thy weary head,
Could from our best of duties ever shrink ?
Sooner the sun from his high sphere should sink
Than we, ungrateful, leave thee in that day,
To pine in solitude thy life away,
Or shun thee, tottering on the grave's cold brink.
Banish the thought !—where'er our steps may roam,
O'er smiling plains, or wastes without a tree,
Still will fond memory point our hearts to thee,
And paint the pleasures of thy peaceful home ;
While duty bids us all thy griefs assuage,
And smooth the pillow of thy sinking age.

SONNET.

YES, 'twill be over soon,—this sickly dream
Of life will vanish from my feverish brain :
And death my wearied spirit will redeem
From this wild region of unvaried pain.

Yon brook will glide as softly as before,
Yon landscape smile, yon golden harvest grow,
Yon sprightly lark on mountain wing will soar
When Henry's name is heard no more below.
I sigh when all my youthful friends caress,
They laugh in health, and future evils brave ;
Them shall a wife and smiling children bless,
While I am mouldering in the silent grave.
God of the just, Thou gav'st the bitter cup ;
I bow to thy behest, and drink it up.

TO CONSUMPTION.

GENTLY, most gently, on thy victim's head,
Consumption, lay thine hand !—let me decay,
Like the expiring lamp, unseen, away,
And softly go to slumber with the dead.
And if 'tis true what holy men have said,
That strains angelic oft foretell the day
Of death to those good men who fall thy prey,
Oh let the aërial music round my bed,
Dissolving sad in dying symphony,
Whisper the solemn warning in mine ear ;
That I may bid my weeping friends good-by
Ere I depart upon my journey drear ;
And, smiling faintly on the painful past,
Compose my decent head, and breathe my last.

SONNET.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF M. DESBARREAU.

THY judgments, Lord, are just ; thou lov'st to wear
The face of pity and of love divine ;
But mine is guilt—thou must not, canst not spare,
While Heaven is true, and equity is thine.
Yes, O my God ! such crimes as mine, so dread,
Leave but the choice of punishment to thee ;
Thy interest calls for judgment on my head,
And even thy mercy dares not plead for me !
Thy will be done, since 'tis thy glory's due,
Did from mine eyes the endless torrents flow ;
Smite—it is time—though endless death ensue,
I bless the avenging hand that lays me low.
But on what spot shall fall thine anger's flood,
That has not first been drench'd in Christ's atoning
blood ?

SONNET.

WHEN I sit musing on the chequer'd past
(A term much darken'd with untimely woes),
My thoughts revert to her for whom still flows
The tear, though half disown'd ; and binding fast
Pride's stubborn cheat to my too yielding heart,
I say to her she robb'd me of my rest,
When that was all my wealth. 'Tis true my breast
Received from her this wearing, lingering smart ;
Yet, ah ! I cannot bid her form depart ;

Though wrong'd, I love her—yet in anger love,
For she was most unworthy. Then I prove
Vindictive joy ; and on my stern front gleams,
Throned in dark clouds, inflexible
The native pride of my much injured heart.

SONNET.

SWEET to the gay of heart is Summer's smile,
Sweet the wild music of the laughing Spring ;
But ah ! my soul far other scenes beguile,
Where gloomy storms their sullen shadows fling.
Is it for me to strike the Idalian string—
Raise the soft music of the warbling wire,
While in my ears the howls of furies ring,
And melancholy wastes the vital fire ?
Away with thoughts like these—To some lone cave
Where howls the shrill blast, and where sweeps the
wave,
Direct my steps ; there, in the lonely drear,
I'll sit remote from worldly noise, and muse
Till through my soul shall Peace her balm infuse,
And whisper sounds of comfort in mine ear.

SONNET.

QUICK o'er the wintry waste dart fiery shafts—
Bleak blows the blast—now howls—then faintly dies—
And oft upon its awful wings it wafts
The dying wanderer's distant, feeble cries.

Now, when athwart the gloom gaunt horror stalks,
And midnight hags their damned vigils hold,
The pensive poet 'mid the wild waste walks,
And ponders on the ill's life's paths unfold.
Mindless of dangers hovering round, he goes,
Insensible to every outward ill ;
Yet oft his bosom heaves with rending throes,
And oft big tears adown his worn cheeks trill.
Ah ! 'tis the anguish of a mental sore,
Which gnaws his heart, and bids him hope no more.

BALLADS, SONGS, AND HYMNS.

GONDOLINE. A BALLAD.

- 1 THE night it was still, and the moon it shone
Serenely on the sea,
And the waves at the foot of the rifted rock
They murmur'd pleasantly,
- 2 When Gondoline roam'd along the shore,
A maiden full fair to the sight ;
Though love had made bleak the rose on her cheek,
And turn'd it to deadly white.
- 3 Her thoughts they were drear, and the silent tear
It fill'd her faint blue eye,
As oft she heard, in fancy's ear,
Her Bertrand's dying sigh.
- 4 Her Bertrand was the bravest youth
Of all our good king's men,
And he was gone to the Holy Land
To fight the Saracen.

- 5 And many a month had pass'd away,
And many a rolling year,
But nothing the maid from Palestine
Could of her lover hear.
- 6 Full oft she vainly tried to pierce
The ocean's misty face ;
Full oft she thought her lover's bark
She on the wave could trace.
- 7 And every night she placed a light
In the high rock's lonely tower,
To guide her lover to the land,
Should the murky tempest lower.
- 8 But now despair had seized her breast,
And sunken in her eye ;
' Oh tell me but if Bertrand live,
And I in peace will die.'
- 9 She wander'd o'er the lonely shore,
The curlew scream'd above,
She heard the scream with a sickening heart,
Much boding of her love.
- 10 Yet still she kept her lonely way,
And this was all her cry,
' Oh ! tell me but if Bertrand live,
And I in peace shall die.'
- 11 And now she came to a horrible rift
All in the rock's hard side,
A bleak and blasted oak o'erspread
The cavern yawning wide.

- 12 And pendant from its dismal top
The deadly nightshade hung ;
The hemlock and the aconite
Across the mouth were flung.
- 13 And all within was dark and drear,
And all without was calm ;
Yet Gondoline enter'd, her soul upheld
By some deep-working charm.
- 14 And as she enter'd the cavern wide,
The moonbeam gleamed pale,
And she saw a snake on the craggy rock,
It clung by its slimy tail.
- 15 Her foot it slipp'd, and she stood aghast,
She trod on a bloated toad ;
Yet, still upheld by the secret charm,
She kept upon her road.
- 16 And now upon her frozen ear
Mysterious sounds arose ;
So on the mountain's piny top
The blustering north-wind blows.
- 17 Then furious peals of laughter loud
Were heard with thundering sound,
Till they died away in soft decay,
Low whispering o'er the ground.
- 18 Yet still the maiden onward went,
The charm yet onward led,
Though each big glaring ball of sight
Seem'd bursting from her head.

- 19 But now a pale blue light she saw,
It from a distance came ;
She follow'd, till upon her sight
Burst full a flood of flame.
- 20 She stood appall'd ; yet still the charm
Upheld her sinking soul ;
Yet each bent knee the other smote,
And each wild eye did roll.
- 21 And such a sight as she saw there
No mortal saw before,
And such a sight as she saw there
No mortal shall see more.
- 22 A burning caldron stood in the midst,
The flame was fierce and high,
And all the cave so wide and long
Was plainly seen thereby.
- 23 And round about the caldron stout
Twelve wither'd witches stood ;
Their waists were bound with living snakes,
And their hair was stiff with blood.
- 24 Their hands were gory too ; and red
And fiercely flamed their eyes :
And they were muttering indistinct
Their hellish mysteries.
- 25 And suddenly they join'd their hands,
And utter'd a joyous cry,
And round about the caldron stout
They danced right merrily.

- 26 And now they stopp'd ; and each prepared
 To tell what she had done,
 Since last the lady of the night
 Her waning course had run.
- 27 Behind a rock stood Gondoline,
 Thick weeds her face did veil,
 And she lean'd fearful forwarder,
 To hear the dreadful tale.
- 28 The first arose : She said she'd seen
 Rare sport since the blind cat mew'd,
 She'd been to sea in a leaky sieve,
 And a jovial storm had brew'd.
- 29 She call'd around the winged winds,
 And raised a devilish rout ;
 And she laugh'd so loud, the peals were heard
 Full fifteen leagues about.
- 30 She said there was a little bark
 Upon the roaring wave,
 And there was a woman there who'd been
 To see her husband's grave.
- 31 And she had got a child in her arms,
 It was her only child,
 And oft its little infant pranks
 Her heavy heart beguiled.
- 32 And there was, too, in that same bark
 A father and his son :
 The lad was sickly, and the sire
 Was old and woe-begone.

- 33 And when the tempest waxed strong,
And the bark could no more it 'bide,
She said it was jovial fun to hear
How the poor devils cried.
- 34 The mother clasp'd her orphan child
Unto her breast and wept ;
And, sweetly folded in her arms,
The careless baby slept.
- 35 And she told how, in the shape o' the wind,
As manfully it roar'd,
She twisted her hand in the infant's hair,
And threw it overboard.
- 36 And to have seen the mother's pangs,
'Twas a glorious sight to see ;
The crew could scarcely hold her down
From jumping in the sea.
- 37 The hag held a lock of the hair in her hand,
And it was soft and fair :
It must have been a lovely child
To have had such lovely hair.
- 38 And she said, the father in his arms
He held his sickly son,
And his dying throes they fast arose,
His pains were nearly done.
- 39 And she throttled the youth with her sinewy hands,
And his face grew deadly blue ;
And the father he tore his thin gray hair,
And kiss'd the livid hue.

- 40 And then she told how she bored a hole
 In the bark, and it fill'd away ;
And 'twas rare to hear how some did swear,
 And some did vow and pray.
- 41 The man and woman they soon were dead,
 The sailors their strength did urge ;
But the billows that beat were their winding-sheet,
 And the winds sung their funeral dirge.
- 42 She threw the infant's hair in the fire,
 The red flame flamed high,
And round about the caldron stout
 They danced right merrily.
- 43 The second begun : She said she had done
 The task that Queen Hecate had set her,
And that the devil, the father of evil,
 Had never accomplish'd a better.
- 44 She said, there was an aged woman,
 And she had a daughter fair,
Whose evil habits fill'd her heart
 With misery and care.
- 45 The daughter had a paramour,
 A wicked man was he,
And oft the woman him against
 Did murmur grievously.
- 46 And the hag had work'd the daughter up
 To murder her old mother,
That then she might seize on all her goods,
 And wanton with her lover.

- 47 And one night as the old woman
Was sick and ill in bed,
And pondering solely on the life
Her wicked daughter led,
- 48 She heard her footstep on the floor,
And she raised her pallid head,
And she saw her daughter with a knife
Approaching to her bed.
- 49 And said, 'My child, I'm very ill,
I have not long to live,
Now kiss my cheek, that ere I die
Thy sins I may forgive.'
- 50 And the murderess bent to kiss her cheek,
And she lifted the sharp bright knife,
And the mother saw her fell intent,
And hard she begg'd for life.
- 51 But prayers would nothing her avail,
And she scream'd aloud with fear,
But the house was lone, and the piercing screams
Could reach no human ear.
- 52 And though that she was sick, and old,
She struggled hard, and fought ;
The murderess cut three fingers through
Ere she could reach her throat.
- 53 And the hag she held the fingers up,
The skin was mangled sore ;
And they all agreed a nobler deed
Was never done before.

- 54 And she threw the fingers in the fire,
The red flame flamed high,
And round about the caldron stout
They danced right merrily.
- 55 The third arose : She said she 'd been
To holy Palestine ;
And seen more blood in one short day
Than they had all seen in nine.
- 56 Now Gondoline, with fearful steps,
Drew nearer to the flame,
For much she dreaded now to hear
Her hapless lover's name.
- 57 The hag related then the sports
Of that eventful day,
When on the well-contested field
Full fifteen thousand lay.
- 58 She said that she in human gore
Above the knees did wade,
And that no tongue could truly tell
The tricks she there had play'd.
- 59 There was a gallant-featured youth,
Who like a hero fought ;
He kiss'd a bracelet on his wrist,
And every danger sought.
- 60 And in a vassal's garb disguised,
Unto the knight she sues,
And tells him she from Britain comes,
And brings unwelcome news.

- 61 That three days ere she had embark'd,
His love had given her hand
Unto a wealthy Thane—and thought
Him dead in Holy Land.
- 62 And to have seen how he did writhe
When this her tale she told,
It would have made a wizard's blood
Within his heart run cold.
- 63 Then fierce he spurr'd his warrior steed,
And sought the battle's bed ;
And soon, all mangled o'er with wounds,
He on the cold turf bled.
- 64 And from his smoking corse she tore
His head, half clove in two.
She ceased, and from beneath her garb
The bloody trophy drew.
- 65 The eyes were starting from their socks,
The mouth it ghastly grinn'd,
And there was a gash across the brow,
The scalp was nearly skinn'd.
- 66 'Twas Bertrand's head ! With a terrible scream
The maiden gave a spring,
And from her fearful hiding-place
She fell into the ring.
- 67 The lights they fled—the caldron sunk,
Deep thunders shook the dome,
And hollow peals of laughter came
Resounding through the gloom.

- 68 Insensible the maiden lay
 Upon the hellish ground,
And still mysterious sounds were heard
 At intervals around.
- 69 She woke—she half arose—and wild
 She cast a horrid glare;
The sounds had ceased, the lights had fled,
 And all was stillness there.
- 70 And through an awning in the rock
 The moon it sweetly shone,
And show'd a river in the cave
 Which dismally did moan.
- 71 The stream was black, it sounded deep
 As it rush'd the rocks between;
It offer'd well, for madness fired
 The breast of Gondoline.
- 72 She plunged in, the torrent moan'd
 With its accustom'd sound,
And hollow peals of laughter loud
 Again rebellow'd round.
- 73 The maid was seen no more,—but oft
 Her ghost is known to glide,
At midnight's silent, solemn hour,
 Along the ocean's side.
-

A BALLAD.

- 1 BE hush'd, be hush'd, ye bitter winds,
Ye pelting rains, a little rest ;
Lie still, lie still, ye busy thoughts,
That wring with grief my aching breast.
 - 2 Oh ! cruel was my faithless love,
To triumph o'er an artless maid ;
Oh ! cruel was my faithless love,
To leave the breast by him betray'd.
 - 3 When exiled from my native home,
He should have wiped the bitter tear ;
Nor left me, faint and lone, to roam,
A heart-sick weary wanderer here.
 - 4 My child moans sadly in my arms,
The winds they will not let it sleep :
Ah, little knows the hapless babe
What makes its wretched mother weep !
 - 5 Now lie thee still, my infant dear,
I cannot bear thy sobs to see ;
Harsh is thy father, little one,
And never will he shelter thee.
 - 6 Oh, that I were but in my grave,
And winds were piping o'er me loud,
And thou, my poor, my orphan babe,
Wert nestling in thy mother's shroud !
-

THE LULLABY OF A FEMALE CONVICT TO
HER CHILD,

THE NIGHT PREVIOUS TO EXECUTION.

- 1 SLEEP, baby mine,¹ enkerchief'd on my bosom,
Thy cries they pierce again my bleeding breast ;
Sleep, baby mine, not long thou'lt have a mother
To lull thee fondly in her arms to rest.
 - 2 Baby, why dost thou keep this sad complaining ?
Long from mine eyes have kindly slumbers fled ;
Hush, hush, my babe, the night is quickly waning,
And I would fain compose my aching head.
 - 3 Poor wayward wretch ! and who will heed thy weeping,
When soon an outcast on the world thou'lt be ?
Who then will soothe thee, when thy mother's sleeping
In her low grave of shame and infamy ?
 - 4 Sleep, baby mine—To-morrow I must leave thee,
And I would snatch an interval of rest :
Sleep these last moments ere the laws bereave thee,
For never more thou'lt press a mother's breast.
-

THE SAVOYARD'S RETURN.

- 1 OH ! yonder is the well-known spot,
My dear, my long-lost native home !
Oh, welcome is yon little cot,
Where I shall rest, no more to roam !

¹ Sir Philip Sidney has a poem, beginning, ' Sleep, baby mine.'

Oh! I have travell'd far and wide,
O'er many a distant foreign land ;
Each place, each province I have tried,
And sung and danced my saraband ;
But all their charms could not prevail
To steal my heart from yonder vale.

2 Of distant climes the false report
It lured me from my native land ;
It bade me rove—my sole support
My cymbals and my saraband.
The woody dell, the hanging rock,
The chamois skipping o'er the heights ;
The plain adorn'd with many a flock,
And, oh! a thousand more delights,
That grace yon dear beloved retreat,
Have backward won my weary feet.

3 Now safe return'd, with wandering tired,
No more my little home I'll leave ;
And many a tale of what I've seen
Shall while away the winter's eve.
Oh! I have wander'd far and wide,
O'er many a distant foreign land ;
Each place, each province I have tried,
And sung and danced my saraband ;
But all their charms could not prevail
To steal my heart from yonder vale.

A PASTORAL SONG.

- 1 Come, Anna ! come, the morning dawns,
Faint streaks of radiance tinge the skies ;
Come, let us seek the dewy lawns,
And watch the early lark arise ;
While nature, clad in vesture gay,
Hails the loved return of day.
 - 2 Our flocks, that nip the scanty blade
Upon the moor, shall seek the vale ;
And then, secure beneath the shade,
We 'll listen to the throstle's tale,
And watch the silver clouds above,
As o'er the azure vault they rove.
 - 3 Come, Anna ! come, and bring thy lute,
That with its tones, so softly sweet,
In cadence with my mellow flute,
We may beguile the noontide heat ;
While near the mellow bee shall join,
To raise a harmony divine.
 - 4 And then at eve, when silence reigns,
Except when heard the beetle's hum,
We 'll leave the sober-tinted plains,
To these sweet heights again we 'll come ;
And thou to thy soft lute shalt play
A solemn vesper to departing day.
-

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A solemn vesper to departing day.
-

MELODY.

- 1 YES, once more that dying strain—
 Anna, touch thy lute for me ;
 Sweet, when pity's tones complain,
 Doubly sweet is melody.
 - 2 While the Virtues thus enweave
 Mildly soft the thrilling song,
 Winter's long and lonesome eve
 Glides unfelt, unseen, along.
 - 3 Thus when life hath stolen away,
 And the wintry night is near,
 Thus shall virtue's friendly ray
 Age's closing evening cheer.
-

SONG.

BY WALLER.

A lady of Cambridge lent Waller's Poems to the Author, and when he returned them to her, she discovered an additional stanza written by him at the bottom of the song here copied.

- 1 Go, lovely rose !
Tell her that wastes her time on me,
 That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

2 Tell her that 's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

3 Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired ;
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

4 Then die, that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee ;
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.

5 [Yet, though thou fade,
From thy dead leaves let fragrance rise ;
And teach the maid
That Goodness Time's rude hand defies,
That Virtue lives when beauty dies.]

H. K. WHITE.

THE WANDERING BOY.

A SONG.

1 WHEN the winter wind whistles along the wild moor,
And the cottager shuts on the beggar his door ;
When the chilling tear stands in my comfortless eye,
Oh, how hard is the lot of the Wandering Boy !

- 2 The winter is cold, and I have no vest,
And my heart it is cold as it beats in my breast ;
No father, no mother, no kindred have I,
For I am a parentless Wandering Boy.
- 3 Yet I had a home, and I once had a sire,
A mother who granted each infant desire ;
Our cottage it stood in a wood-embower'd vale,
Where the ringdove would warble its sorrowful
tale.
- 4 But my father and mother were summon'd away,
And they left me to hard-hearted strangers a
prey ;
I fled from their rigour with many a sigh,
And now I 'm a poor little Wandering Boy.
- 5 The wind it is keen, and the snow loads the
gale,
And no one will list to my innocent tale ;
I'll go to the grave where my parents both lie,
And death shall befriend the poor Wandering Boy.

CANZONET.

- 1 MAIDEN ! wrap thy mantle round thee,
Cold the rain beats on thy breast :
Why should Horror's voice astound thee ?
Death can bid the wretched rest !
All under the tree
Thy bed may be,
And thou may'st slumber peacefully.

- 2 Maiden ! once gay pleasure knew thee,
Now thy cheeks are pale and deep :
Love has been a felon to thee,
Yet, poor maiden, do not weep :
There 's rest for thee
All under the tree,
Where thou wilt sleep most peacefully.
-

SONG.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF FOURTEEN.

- 1 SOFTLY, softly blow, ye breezes,
Gently o'er my Edwy fly !
Lo ! he slumbers, slumbers sweetly ;
Softly, zephyrs, pass him by !
My love is asleep,
He lies by the deep,
All along where the salt waves sigh.
- 2 I have cover'd him with rushes,
Water-flags, and branches dry.
Edwy, long have been thy slumbers ;
Edwy, Edwy, ope thine eye !
My love is asleep,
He lies by the deep,
All along where the salt waves sigh.
- 3 Still he sleeps ; he will not waken,
Fastly closed is his eye ;
Paler is his cheek, and chiller
Than the icy moon on high.

Alas ! he is dead,
He has chose his death-bed
All along where the salt waves sigh.

- 4 Is it, is it so, my Edwy ?
Will thy slumbers never fly ?
Couldst thou think I would survive thee ?
No, my love, thou bid'st me die ;
Thou bid'st me seek
Thy death-bed bleak
All along where the salt waves sigh.
- 5 I will gently kiss thy cold lips,
On thy breast I'll lay my head,
And the winds shall sing our death-dirge,
And our shroud the waters spread ;
The moon will smile sweet,
And the wild wave will beat,
Oh ! so softly o'er our lonely bed.
-

THE SHIPWRECKED SOLITARY'S SONG TO THE NIGHT.

- 1 THOU, spirit of the spangled night !
I woo thee from the watch-tower high,
Where thou dost sit to guide the bark
Of lonely mariner.
- 2 The winds are whistling o'er the wolds,
The distant main is moaning low ;
Come, let us sit and weave a song—
A melancholy song !

- 3 Sweet is the scented gale of morn,
And sweet the noontide's fervid beam,
But sweeter far the solemn calm
That marks thy mournful reign.
- 4 I've pass'd here many a lonely year,
And never human voice have heard ;
I've pass'd here many a lonely year,
A solitary man.
- 5 And I have linger'd in the shade,
From sultry noon's hot beams ; and I
Have knelt before my wicker door,
To sing my evening song.
- 6 And I have hail'd the gray morn, high
On the blue mountain's misty brow,
And tried to tune my little reed
To hymns of harmony.
- 7 But never could I tune my reed,
At morn, or noon, or eve, so sweet,
As when upon the ocean shore
I hail'd thy star-beam mild.
- 8 The dayspring brings not joy to me,
The moon it whispers not of peace ;
But oh ! when darkness robes the heavens,
My woes are mix'd with joy.
- 9 And then I talk, and often think
Aërial voices answer me ;
And oh ! I am not then alone—
A solitary man.

- 10 And when the blustering winter winds
Howl in the woods that clothe my cave,
I lay me on my lonely mat,
And pleasant are my dreams.
- 11 And fancy gives me back my wife ;
And fancy gives me back my child ;
She gives me back my little home,
And all its placid joys.
- 12 Then hateful is the morning hour,
That calls me from the dream of bliss,
To find myself still lone, and hear
The same dull sounds again.
- 13 The deep-toned winds, the moaning sea,
The whispering of the boding trees,
The brook's eternal flow, and oft
The condor's hollow scream.
-

THE WONDERFUL JUGGLER.

A SONG.

- 1 COME all ye true hearts, who, Old England to save,
Now shoulder the musket, or plough the rough
wave,
I will sing you a song of a wonderful fellow,
Who has ruin'd Jack Pudding, and broke
Punchinello.
Derry down, down, high derry down.

- 2 This juggler is little, and ugly, and black,
 But, like Atlas, he stalks with the world at his
 back ;
 'Tis certain, all fear of the devil he scorns ;
 Some say they are cousins ; we know he wears
 horns.

Derry down.

- 3 At hop, skip, and jump, who so famous as he ?
 He hopp'd o'er an army, he skipp'd o'er the sea ;
 And he jump'd from the desk of a village attorney
 To the throne of the Bourbons—a pretty long
 journey.

Derry down.

- 4 He tosses up kingdoms the same as a ball,
 And his cup is so fashion'd it catches them all ;
 The Pope and Grand Turk have been heard to
 declare
 His skill at the long bow has made them both
 stare.

Derry down.

- 5 He has shown off his tricks in France, Italy, Spain ;
 And Germany too knows his legerdemain ;
 So hearing John Bull has a taste for strange sights,
 He 's coming to London to put us to rights.

Derry down.

- 6 To encourage his puppets to venture this trip,
 He has built them such boats as can conquer a ship ;
 With a gun of good metal, that shoots out so far,
 It can silence the broadsides of three men of war.

Derry down.

- 7 This new Ketterfelto, his show to complete,
Means his boats should all sink as they pass by
our fleet ;
Then, as under the ocean their course they steer
right on,
They can pepper their foes from the bed of old Triton.
Derry down.
- 8 If this project should fail, he has others in store ;
Wooden horses, for instance, may bring them safe o'er ;
Or the genius of France (as the Moniteur tells)
May order balloons, or provide diving bells.
Derry down.
- 9 When Philip of Spain fitted out his Armada,
Britain saw his designs, and could meet her invader ;
But how to greet Boney she never will know,
If he comes in the style of a fish or a crow.
Derry down.
- 10 Now if our rude tars will so crowd up the seas,
That his boats have not room to go down when they
please,
Can't he wait till the Channel is quite frozen over,
And a stout pair of skates will transport him to Dover?
Derry down.
- 11 How welcome he'll be it were needless to say ;
Neither he nor his puppets shall e'er go away ;
I am sure at his heels we shall constantly stick,
Till we know he has played off his very last trick.
Derry down, down, high derry down.

HYMN.

In Heaven we shall be purified, so as to be able to endure the splendours
of the Deity.

- 1 AWAKE, sweet harp of Judah, wake,
Retune thy strings for Jesus' sake ;
We sing the Saviour of our race,
The Lamb, our shield and hiding-place.
- 2 When God's right arm is bared for war,
And thunders clothe his cloudy car,
Where, where, oh, where shall man retire,
To escape the horrors of his ire ?
- 3 'Tis he, the Lamb, to him we fly,
While the dread tempest passes by ;
God sees his Well-beloved's face,
And spares us in our hiding-place.
- 4 Thus while we dwell in this low scene,
The Lamb is our unfailing screen ;
To him, though guilty, still we run,
And God still spares us for his Son.
- 5 While yet we sojourn here below,
Pollutions still our hearts o'erflow ;
Fall'n, abject, mean, a sentenced race,
We deeply need a hiding-place.
- 6 Yet, courage—days and years will glide,
And we shall lay these clods aside,
Shall be baptised in Jordan's flood,
And wash'd in Jesus' cleansing blood.

- 7 Then pure, immortal, sinless, freed,
We through the Lamb shall be decreed ;
Shall meet the Father face to face,
And need no more a hiding-place.¹
-

A HYMN FOR FAMILY WORSHIP.

- 1 O LORD, another day is flown,
And we, a lonely band,
Are met once more before thy throne,
To bless thy fostering hand.
- 2 And wilt thou bend a listening ear
To praises low as ours ?
Thou wilt ! for thou dost love to hear
The song which meekness pours.
- 3 And, Jesus, thou thy smiles wilt deign,
As we before thee pray ;
For thou didst bless the infant train,
And we are less than they.
- 4 O let thy grace perform its part,
And let contention cease ;
And shed abroad in every heart
Thine everlasting peace !
- 5 Thus chasten'd, cleansed, entirely thine,
A flock by Jesus led ;
The Sun of Holiness shall shine
In glory on our head.

¹ The last stanza of this hymn was added extemporaneously, by the Author, one summer evening, when he was with a few friends on the Trent, and singing it as he was used to do on such occasions.

- 6 And thou wilt turn our wandering feet,
And thou wilt bless our way ;
Till worlds shall fade, and faith shall greet
The dawn of lasting day.
-

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

- 1 WHEN, marshall'd on the nightly plain,
The glittering host bestud the sky,
One star alone, of all the train,
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.
- 2 Hark ! hark ! to God the chorus breaks,
From every host, from every gem ;
But one alone the Saviour speaks—
It is the Star of Bethlehem.
- 3 Once on the raging seas I rode,
The storm was loud, the night was dark,
The ocean yawn'd, and rudely blow'd
The wind that toss'd my foundering bark.
- 4 Deep horror then my vitals froze,
Death-struck, I ceased the tide to stem ;
When suddenly a star arose—
It was the Star of Bethlehem.
- 5 It was my guide, my light, my all,
It bade my dark forebodings cease ;
And through the storm and danger's thrall
It led me to the port of peace.

- 6 Now safely moor'd, my peril's o'er,
I'll sing, first in night's diadem,
For ever, and for evermore,
The Star!—the Star of Bethlehem!
-

A HYMN.

- 1 O LORD my God, in mercy turn,
In mercy hear a sinner mourn!
To thee I call, to thee I cry,
Oh leave me, leave me not to die!
- 2 I strove against thee, Lord, I know,
I spurn'd thy grace, I mock'd thy law;
The hour is past—the day's gone by,
And I am left alone to die.
- 3 O pleasures past, what are ye now
But thorns about my bleeding brow!
Spectres that hover round my brain,
And aggravate and mock my pain.
- 4 For pleasure I have given my soul;
Now, Justice, let thy thunders roll!
Now, Vengeance, smile—and with a blow
Lay the rebellious ingrate low.
- 5 Yet, Jesus, Jesus! there I'll cling,
I'll crowd beneath his sheltering wing;
I'll clasp the cross, and holding there,
Even me, oh bliss!—his wrath may spare.

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

JAMES GRAHAME.

THE

LIFE AND GENIUS OF JAMES GRAHAME.

No Life, in a separate form, so far as we know, has yet appeared of the author of the "Sabbath," and the most of our materials for this notice are derived from a pleasing little memoir of Grahame in the first volume of *Blackwood*, signed Y, and written by a personal friend of the poet's. James Grahame was born in Glasgow on the 22d of April 1765, and was educated there in the usual form, first at the Grammar-school, and then at the College. When very young, his ruling passion displayed itself in the composition of some fine Latin verses. He used seldom to walk abroad without a volume of the Classics in his pocket, and had a copy of the Greek Testament always by his bedside to employ his waking hours. His father, who was connected with the law (a writer, as they call it in Scotland, answering nearly to an attorney in England), seems to have been an intelligent man, and his mother, like all mothers of poets, had herself a touch of genius. The most remarkable member of the family, however, next to James, was his eldest sister, who, to fine talents and tastes, added an exquisite musical faculty. Campbell the poet used to call her the "Angel of Music." Her voice exerted a peculiar power over her brother, whose soul rose to its grand swells, or melted to its softer cadences, in a manner, it is said, of which eye-witnesses only could conceive. Some time before her premature death, she lost her voice through illness; and sorely did the poet bewail *its* loss before called on, with a far deeper grief, to mourn *her own*. Well

might he have said to her, as she lay a-dying, in the words of Coleridge—

“ They surely have no need of you
In the place where you are going ;
Earth has its angels all too few,
While Heaven is overflowing.”

Grahame has expressed his sorrow at his sister's death in some very tender lines, in his poem on “Melrose Abbey.” It is said that Campbell's beautiful stanzas on “Painting,” including the lines,

“ But thou canst give us back the dead,
Even in the loveliest looks they wore,”

were suggested by the sight of the portrait of this amiable woman after her decease. Grahame himself was a musician; and the Bard of Hope describes him, after returning from a walk to Arthur's Seat, spending the night alone in pouring out extempore hymns to God, in a depth of musical intonation and with an enthusiasm of devotion which Campbell never heard equalled.

Grahame's tastes and habits inclined him to the study of divinity; and it is deeply to be regretted that his father dissuaded him from this, and induced him to follow his own profession, that of the law. He came to Edinburgh, was articled as apprentice to his cousin, Lawrence Hill, and, after the usual routine, commenced practice, in 1791, as Writer to the Signet. Save in the case of the kindred spirits of Cowper and Kirke White, few men have ever been less at home in an attorney's office than poor Grahame. Whatever may be said, on other grounds, in favour of the profession of law, it is certainly not a congenial profession for a poet. He had scarcely entered on his work as a W.S. when his father died, and he again turned his thoughts to the church. Again, however, his purpose was overruled by his friends, and for years he continued to plod on as a writer, although disliking alike the duties and the confinement of the occupation. By and by he passed as an Advocate, expecting thus to obtain more leisure for the prosecution of his literary studies.

Soon after this he commenced his career as an author by writing in the *Kelso Mail*, under the commonplace and trashy signature of "Matilda," those graphic sketches of nature which he afterwards expanded and republished, under the title of the "Rural Calendar." About the commencement of the century he wrote a tragedy on Mary Stuart, which, without much dramatic, had considerable poetic merit. It was never, we believe, acted.

In 1802 he married Miss Grahame, eldest daughter of Richard Grahame, Esq. of Annan, a lady of superior understanding and amiable character. She loved and admired her husband; but discouraged his poetical pursuits, under the idea that they interfered with his professional pursuits. One day, shortly after marriage, he stepped in with a little humble anonymous volume of poetry in his hand, entitled "The Sabbath," and laid it on his wife's table. She took it up—began to read, Grahame meanwhile pacing the apartment in impatient anxiety—became fascinated, and at last cried out, "Ah! James, if you could but write something like this!" A delightful *eclaircissement* took place. The love of their espousals was renewed with interest. It was one of those golden moments in life, so pure and exquisite that Envy herself views them with complacency. His wife no longer frowned on his Muse. We are reminded of the somewhat similar incident in the history of Dr Johnson's wife, who, when she read the first numbers of the "Rambler," exclaimed to him, "I always thought well of you, but never dreamed you could do anything so good as this."

Grahame had managed to conceal the fact of his connexion with the poem from every one except Pillans (brother of the respected Professor Pillans), his publisher, who, that the anonymous might be strictly preserved, met him in coffee-houses to make the necessary arrangements. The "Sabbath," thus modestly ushered into the world, instantly went to the heart of Scotland, and drew around the author all who loved the Lord's Day and the memory of the brave Covenanters. The applause was universal, with the exception of the *Edinburgh Review*, which uttered a small pitiful snarl, dictated as

much by hatred of religion as by contempt for the poetry of Grahame. That Grahame felt this attack keenly is certain, but he did not openly reclaim against it, and he continued on friendly terms with Jeffrey, who made the *amende honorable*, some years after, in a review of a far inferior poem—"British Georgics." It is said that *Mrs* Grahame, like Lady Scott, in reference to the review of "*Marmion*," never forgave the critic, who probably, in his secret heart, never forgave himself.

The kind reception of the "*Sabbath*" confirmed Grahame's attachment to poetry; and at Kirkhill, a beautiful retreat on the banks of the Esk, where he occupied a cottage for two successive summers, he composed the "*Birds of Scotland*." His desire to enter the church revived at this time with double force. Walking, one fine summer evening, near the parish kirk of Borthwick with a friend, Grahame cast a delighted look at the scene, as shown in the gilding of the sun's last rays, and said, "I wish such a place as that had fallen to my lot." "Would it not become wearisome?" rejoined the other. "Oh no!" he replied; "it would be delightful to live a life of usefulness among a simple people, unmolested with petty cares and ceremonies."

This feeling, proving not a mere sigh of sunset enthusiasm, led him, next spring, to quit the bar and Edinburgh, and to go southwards in quest of ordination in the English Church. He had sympathies with all the Churches of the Reformation, and had sung, with intense interest, the Covenanting struggle against

"A tyrant's and a bigot's bloody laws;"

but he seems to have preferred the outward forms and liturgic worship of the English Establishment. Perhaps, also, he might imagine that a poetical style of evangelical preaching would be better appreciated in the south than in the north. He repaired, therefore, first to Chester and then to London, where he was ordained by the Bishop of Norwich. His fame had doubtless travelled before, as we notice a favourable review, in 1806, of his poems in the *Christian Observer*, then a powerful periodical, and the organ of the Moderate Evan-

gelicals in the Church of England. He was soon appointed curate of Shipton, in Gloucestershire, where he resided with his family for a year, and then came to Annan to visit his wife's relations. While there, he heard of a vacancy in St George's Chapel, Edinburgh, and stood accordingly as a candidate. He preached several times in the metropolis, and was much admired. His sermons and his manner are described as "simple, elegant, and affecting. His appearance, in the robes of his sacred office, was solemn and devout, while the deep tones of a voice rich in natural pathos were rendered still more impressive by the pale hue which sickness had spread over his fine features, and he seemed like a messenger sent from heaven to lead the way to that happier state." His friends were exceedingly anxious to see him elected, partly to enjoy the pleasures of his society again, and partly for the sake of religion; but another candidate was chosen, and the roll of Edinburgh preachers thus missed the honour of a very distinguished name. He bore the disappointment with patience, and mildly said, in answer to the warm expressions of regret and indignation used by a friend, "It matters not where we pass our time for a few short years." He went from Edinburgh to Glasgow to pay what proved a last visit to his aged mother, who died soon afterwards, and returning thence to England, found a new disappointment waiting him. He had become a candidate for a minor canonry in Durham, but found it given to another. He officiated for three months as an interim curate, and, proving popular, was appointed to the curacy of Sedgefield, in the See of Durham, in 1810. This was the highest promotion ever attained by the poet. He preached here with great success, and having officiated on one occasion before the Bishop, to his great delight, would probably have received higher preferment, but fell into bad health, and had to return to Edinburgh for change of air. His complaints outwardly were excruciating headache and oppressive asthma; inwardly, we fear, a wounded spirit and broken heart. His poetry, except the "Sabbath," was far from being rated according to what he thought its merits. In his ministerial work he did not find that satisfaction which he had

expected. He had been, as he said himself, "transplanted too late" to the southland soil and the English Church; and seems often to have sighed for Scottish scenery and Scottish manners. There can be no doubt that a little melancholy mingles with the feeling of the well-known lines in the "British Georgics":—

"How pleasant came thy rushing, silver Tweed,
Upon my ear, when, after roaming long
In southern plains, I've reach'd thy lovely banks!
How bright, renowned Sark, thy little stream,
Like ray of column'd light chasing a shower,
Would cross my homeward path! How sweet the sound
When I, to hear the Doric tongues reply,
Would ask thy well-known name."

He arrived at the house of his only surviving sister, Mrs Archibald Grahame, who resided in Edinburgh. There he became so alarmingly ill that his wife was sent for. He expressed a strong desire to see Glasgow once more, and went there accordingly with Mrs Grahame—to die. It was the retreat of the wounded hare to his form. Yet, although feeling himself doomed, he scarcely expected death so soon. He even intended to preach in Glasgow, and carried with him two sermons for this purpose—the text of one of which was, "O Death, where is thy sting?" He became worse on the road, and having reached Whitehill, near Glasgow, the residence of his eldest brother, he expired on the 14th of September 1811, in the forty-seventh year of his age. He left two sons and a daughter. His wife did not long survive her husband.

No man was ever more beloved by his friends than Grahame. His appearance was grave, swarthy, and majestic, but tempered by mildness, amiability, and unaffected modesty. He was pious as a habit and as a necessity; he swam in devotional feeling as in his native element, but he was far from morose. He loved quiet humour and innocent gaiety, and

"Sometimes when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seem'd as if he drank it up,
He felt with spirit so profound."

His greatest luxury was music, and next to sacred music,

he loved those "Scottish tunes, so sad and slow." Campbell the poet, without much sympathy with Grahame's religious sentiments, admired and loved him, and in his letters speaks of him with profound respect. As Macintosh with Hall, Campbell was probably "awe-struck" by the purity and holiness of Grahame's character. Wilson has written a very touching monody over his loss.

Grahame's genius was limited in its range, but within that range was exquisitely true and beautiful. He had no dramatic power, has written no lyrics of merit, and his vein of thought is far from profound. He has been called the Cowper of Scotland, and resembles him in tenderness of feeling, truth of natural description, and ardent piety, but is vastly inferior in strength of mind, force and continuity of style, and, whatever he might do in private, has in his poetry given no evidence of possessing a particle of Cowper's refined and inimitable humour. He is essentially a descriptive writer, and many of his individual pictures, or rather strokes, are exceedingly felicitous. He has few large or highly-finished paintings, and often when he has commenced a fine flight he suddenly sinks flat upon the ground, like a wounded bird. Sometimes again, after labouring long and unsuccessfully at a piece of description, he, as if in despair, dashes or drops his pencil on the canvas, and produces the desired effect. His poetry lies in small compass, and yet contains a most disproportionate quantity of prosaic matter. One good line to twenty poor and flat ones is about the average, but often the line is so good that it flashes a light on the darkness which is all around it, and reminds you, in his own words, of a

"Ray of column'd light chasing a shower."

Thus in his poem on Jephtha's daughter, that most poetical theme, there occurs only one good line, and it is the last—

"The timbrel at her rooted feet resounds!"

How does that one line tell the whole story of the anguish of the maiden who had come forth "with timbrels and dances" to meet her father; but when she hears of his rash vow, her feet fasten, and her timbrel falls—it is shattered to

expected. He had been, as he said himself, "transplanted too late" to the southland soil and the English Church; and seems often to have sighed for Scottish scenery and Scottish manners. There can be no doubt that a little melancholy mingles with the feeling of the well-known lines in the "British Georgics":—

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fragments, while she stiffens to marble! Often Grahame's reader is about to close his volume in weariness, when suddenly a flash, as from Heaven, gleams over the barren page, lightens it up a moment, and departs. The acute observer will notice this difference between Grahame's prose and that of Milton or Wordsworth:—Theirs may be called *prose-prepense*; it is written on system, to relieve and bring out by contrast the grandeurs and beauties of the other parts; it is the restraining and husbanding of strength. Grahame's seems rather to proceed from fits of flat weakness and poverty. Their flowers appear on stern rocks—Grahame's on wastes of sand. You wonder how they can write so prosaically at times; you wonder how he can often write so poetically.

To this grand objection of inequality the "Sabbath" is less exposed than any other of his poems. Yet every one, we think, will grant that the close is not equal to the commencement; nay, may be called a "lame and impotent conclusion." In this strain Grahame has been fortunate in the choice of a subject, and every Christian reader is astonished that no one, before the year 1802, had sought to sing "*Dies Dominica Regina Dierum*;" that fine pause in the noisy march of the days, coming across the weary life like a sweet memory of youth to a troubled heart, or a sudden slip of sunshine in a stormy sky—ever and anon reappearing, like a thread of gold amidst links of iron—that day of Heaven, which seems at one time as if it had been let down, and at another as if it had lost its way to us from a higher clime—that soft, silent tie of light uniting the last day of the creation with the first day of Christianity, Christ's resurrection day, and it again with the Millennial rest, the "keeping of a Sabbath for the people of God"—that day which Emerson himself calls "the jubilee of the whole world, and which, as it dawns into prisons and hovels, suggests even to the vile a sense of the dignity of spiritual being"—that day which forms at once the bright climax and the blessed commencement of the week, and for which all the other six days seem made; they being sullen or fantastic shadows, it a sober, solemn, glad reality—that day when we feel as if the light, when there is sunshine, were a holier light, like

that "marvellous light" where God dwells; and as if the darkness, when shadow lowers or tempest rages, were a holier darkness, like that into which God sometimes, even in heaven, is said to retire—that day when strange spiritual joys are felt, and strange wings of thought are uplifted, and immortality is not anticipated as a mere possible prospect, but felt as an instinct, and enjoyed as an inheritance;—wonderful, we repeat, it seems, that such a theme as the Christian Sabbath was permitted to come fresh into the hands of a poet of the nineteenth century. And how admirably, on the whole, has Grahame treated it; and how beautiful exceedingly his descriptions of the Sabbath Morning, the Sabbath in the Church, the Sabbath of the Shepherd Boy, the Sabbath of the Shipwrecked Mariner on his lonely crag—and, above all, the Sabbath of the Covenanters among the mountains, when the

"Lyart veteran heard the word of God
By Cameron thunder'd, and by Renwick pour'd
In gentle stream!"

To Grahame be the praise of first finding in the Covenanting struggle that adaptation to the purposes of poetry which has since attracted to it so many men of genius—such novelists as Scott, Galt, and Wilson—such preachers as Irving and William Anderson of Glasgow—and such painters as George Harvey. And although our author died in the prime of life, with a broken constitution, and, we fear, a broken heart, we doubt not that it ministered to him some consolation on his premature deathbed to remember that he had linked together two subjects so dear to every Scottish heart as the Sabbath and the Covenanting struggle by the band of an imperishable poem.*

The "Rural Calendar" and the "British Georgics" belong to the same category, and are distinguished by the same general merits and defects, both being full of prosaic matter, relieved by beautiful touches of natural description, and by striking bursts of patriotic and devotional feeling. In the "Georgics," however, he has introduced far too much merely

* Our gifted friend, Mr Daniel Gorrie, has written an admirable poem on the Sabbath, which gained him the Evangelical Alliance prize.

agricultural matter; and while, as we said, in his other poems his rare flowers bloom amidst sand, *here* they decorate dung. We have not, on account of its great length and general dullness, thought it advisable to include the "Georgics" in this volume, although it contains some of his most beautiful things, such as the lines already quoted, describing his sensations in crossing the Tweed.

The "Birds of Scotland" is a poem more fortunate in the selection than in the execution of the theme. Finer subject we could not conceive for a poem than that of "Birds," including in this not merely the birds of a country, but of the world—the humming-birds, those "atoms of the rainbow;" the mocking-birds, those embodied echoes; the vultures, those mimic thunder-clouds, darkening the heavens with the hues of death; the eagles, those winged leopards, the poets of the upper sky; the condors, those demon dwellers on the verge of everlasting snow; as well as the lyric lark; the nightingale, melodious angel of the darkness; the brooding stock-dove; the owl, with its endless tale of moaning sorrow, told for ever in vain; and the cuckoo, that restless shadow or ghost of a bird, with its veering, evanishing motions, and the one sad ode to the spring perpetually issuing from its monotonous mouth. But we doubt if Grahame were the poet for writing worthily on this subject, and fine as many of his thoughts and expressions are in the "Birds of Scotland," the effect often is feebleness and prolixity. Wilson has in *his* "Birds," his "Glance at Selby's Ornithology," and many other papers, proved that *he* was the true laureate of the grove, and of the glen, too; for, while Grahame excels in describing the nest among the clover, with its "red-veined spheres," but gets giddy in climbing the eyrie on the cliff, and turns pale as he watches the eagle's flight through the thunder-cloud in pursuit of the sun, Wilson is there thoroughly at home, handles fearlessly the "young demons," calmly contemplates the swoop of the parent-birds, and his eye becomes brighter and his pulse firmer as he watches the meeting of the two fierce flames, the fire in the eye of the eagle (the sun-flower of the upper ether), and the fire in the eye of the sun. The first

part of Grahame's "Birds," which treats of the smaller birds of Scotland, is by far the best; but when dealing with the larger and fiercer tribes, he rather shrinks, and shews a timid, if not tame, imagination.

Altogether for Grahame we anticipate a sure, if not a very lofty niche in the temple of Fame. Bolder and more brilliant and varied poets there have been many, but none who has exhibited a warmer heart, a gentler enthusiasm, a more Christian spirit, or, within its own limits, a truer genius.

GRAHAME'S POETICAL WORKS.

THE SABBATH: A POEM.

THE ARGUMENT.

Description of a Sabbath morning in the country—The labourer at home—The town mechanic's morning walk; his meditation—The sound of bells—Crowd proceeding to church—Interval before the service begins—English service—Scriptures read—The organ, with the voices of the people—The sound borne to the sick man's couch—His wish—The worship of God in the solitude of the woods—The shepherd-boy among the hills—People seen on the heights returning from church—Contrast of the present times with those immediately preceding the Revolution—The persecution of the Covenanters—A Sabbath conventicle—Cameron—Renwick—Psalms—Night conventicles during storms—A funeral according to the rites of the Church of England—A female character—The suicide—Expostulation—The incurable of an hospital—A prison scene—Debtors—Divine service in the prison-hall—Persons under sentence of death—Appeal on the indiscriminate severity of criminal law—Comparative mildness of the Jewish law—The year of jubilee—Description of the commencement of the jubilee—The sound of the trumpets through the land—The bondman and his family returning from their servitude to take possession of their inheritance—Emigrants in the wilds of America—Their Sabbath worship—The whole inhabitants of Highland districts who have emigrated together, still regret their country—Even the blind man regrets the objects with which he had been conversant—An emigrant's contrast between the tropical climates and Scotland—The boy who had been born on the voyage—Description of a person on a desert island; his Sabbath; his release—Missionary ship—The Pacific Ocean—Defence of missionaries—Effects of the conversion of the primitive Christians—Transition to the slave-trade—The Sabbath in a slave-ship—Appeal to England on the subject of her encouragement to this horrible complication of crimes—Transition to war—Unfortunate issue of the late war, in France, in Switzerland—Apostrophe to Tell—The attempt to resist too late—The treacherous foes already in possession of the passes; their devastating progress—Desolation—Address to Scotland—Happiness of seclusion from the world—Description of a Sabbath evening

in Scotland—Psalmody—An aged man—Description of an industrious female reduced to poverty by old age and disease—Disinterested virtuous conduct to be found chiefly in the lower walks of life—Test of charity in the opulent—Recommendation to the rich to devote a portion of the Sabbath to the duty of visiting the sick—Invocation to health ; to music—The Beguine nuns—Lazarus—The Resurrection—Dawnings of faith ; its progress ; consummation.

How still the morning of the hallow'd day !
 Mute is the voice of rural labour, hush'd
 The ploughboy's whistle, and the milkmaid's song.
 The scythe lies glitt'ring in the dewy wreath
 Of tedded grass, mingled with fading flowers,
 That yester-morn bloom'd waving in the breeze :
 Sounds the most faint attract the ear—the hum
 Of early bee, the trickling of the dew,
 The distant bleating, midway up the hill.
 Calmness seems throned on yon unmoving cloud. 10
 To him who wanders o'er the upland leas,
 The blackbird's note comes mellower from the dale ;
 And sweeter from the sky the gladsome lark
 Warbles his heaven-tuned song ; the lulling brook
 Murmurs more gently down the deep-sunk glen ;
 While from yon lowly roof, whose curling smoke
 O'ermounts the mist, is heard, at intervals,
 The voice of psalms, the simple song of praise.

With dove-like wings Peace o'er yon village broods :
 The dizzying mill-wheel rests ; the anvil's din 20
 Hath ceased ; all, all around is quietness.
 Less fearful on this day, the limping hare
 Stops, and looks back, and stops, and looks on man,
 Her deadliest foe. The toil-worn horse, set free,
 Unheedful of the pasture, roams at large ;
 And, as his stiff unwieldy bulk he rolls,
 His iron-arm'd hoofs gleam in the morning-ray.
 But chiefly Man the day of rest enjoys ;—

Hail, Sabbath! thee I hail, the poor man's day : 29
 On other days, the man of toil is doom'd
 To eat his joyless bread, lonely, the ground
 Both seat and board, screen'd from the winter's cold
 And summer's heat by neighbouring hedge or tree ;
 But on this day, embosom'd in his home,
 He shares the frugal meal with those he loves ;
 With those he loves he shares the heartfelt joy
 Of giving thanks to God—not thanks of form,
 A word and a grimace, but rev'rently,
 With cover'd face and upward, earnest eye.

Hail, Sabbath! thee I hail, the poor man's day : 40
 The pale mechanic now has leave to breathe
 The morning-air pure from the city's smoke,
 While, wandering slowly up the river-side,
 He meditates on Him whose power he marks
 In each green tree that proudly spreads the bough,
 As in the tiny dew-bent flowers that bloom
 Around the roots ; and while he thus surveys
 With elevated joy each rural charm,
 He hopes (yet fears presumption in the hope)
 To reach those realms where Sabbath never ends. 50

But now his steps a welcome sound recalls :
 Solemn the knell, from yonder ancient pile,
 Fills all the air, inspiring joyful awe :
 Slowly the throng moves o'er the tomb-paved ground :
 The aged man, the bowed down, the blind
 Led by the thoughtless boy, and he who breathes
 With pain, and eyes the new-made grave, well-pleased ;
 These, mingled with the young, the gay, approach
 The house of God : these, spite of all their ills,
 A glow of gladness feel ; with silent praise 60
 They enter in ; a placid stillness reigns,
 Until the man of God, worthy the name,

Opens the book, and reverentially 63
The stated portion reads. A pause ensues :
The organ breathes its distant thunder-notes,
Then swells into a diapason full :
The people rising, sing, ' With harp, with harp,
And voice of psalms ;' harmoniously attuned
The various voices blend ; the long-drawn aisles,
At every close, the lingering strain prolong. 70
And now the tubes a soften'd stop controls,
In softer harmony the people join,
While liquid whispers from yon orphan band
Recall the soul from adoration's trance,
And fill the eye with pity's gentle tears.
Again the organ-peal, loud rolling, meets
The halleluiahs of the choir : sublime
A thousand notes symphoniously ascend,
As if the whole were one, suspended high
In air, soaring heavenward : afar they float, 80
Wafting glad tidings to the sick man's couch :
Raised on his arm, he lists the cadence close,
Yet thinks he hears it still : his heart is cheer'd ;
He smiles on death ; but, ah ! a wish will rise—
' Would I were now beneath that echoing roof !
No lukewarm accents from my lips should flow ;
My heart would sing ; and many a Sabbath-day
My steps should thither turn ; or, wand'ring far
In solitary paths, where wild flowers blow,
There would I bless His name who led me forth 90
From death's dark vale, to walk amid those sweets,
Who gives the bloom of health once more to glow
Upon this cheek, and lights this languid eye.'

It is not only in the sacred fane
That homage should be paid to the Most High ;
There is a temple, one not made with hands,

The vaulted firmament : far in the woods, 97
 Almost beyond the sound of city chime,
 At intervals heard through the breezeless air ;
 When not the limberest leaf is seen to move,
 Save where the linnet lights upon the spray ;
 Where not a floweret bends its little stalk,
 Save when the bee alights upon the bloom ;
 There, rapt in gratitude, in joy, and love,
 The man of God will pass the Sabbath-noon ;
 Silence his praise : his disembodied thoughts,
 Loosed from the load of words, will high ascend
 Beyond the empyreal.—

Nor yet less pleasing at the heavenly throne,
 The Sabbath-service of the shepherd-boy ! 110
 In some lone glen, where every sound is lull'd
 To slumber, save the tinkling of the rill,
 Or bleat of lamb, or hovering falcon's cry,
 Stretch'd on the sward, he reads of Jesse's Son ;
 Or sheds a tear o'er him to Egypt sold,
 And wonders why he weeps : the volume closed,
 With thyme-sprig laid between the leaves, he sings
 The sacred lays, his weekly lesson, conn'd
 With meikle care beneath the lowly roof,
 Where humble lore is learn'd, where humble worth 120
 Pines unrewarded by a thankless State.
 Thus reading, hymning, all alone, unseen,
 The shepherd-boy the Sabbath holy keeps,
 Till on the heights he marks the straggling bands
 Returning homeward from the house of prayer.
 In peace they home resort. Oh blissful days !
 When all men worship God as conscience wills.
 Far other times our fathers' grandsires knew,
 A virtuous race, to godliness devote.
 What though the sceptic's scorn hath dared to soil 130

The record of their fame ! What though the men 131
Of worldly minds have dared to stigmatise
The sister-cause, Religion and the Law,
With Superstition's name ! yet, yet their deeds,
Their constancy in torture and in death,—
These on tradition's tongue still live, these shall
On history's honest page be pictured bright
To latest times. Perhaps some bard, whose Muse
Disdains the servile strain of Fashion's choir,
May celebrate their unambitious names. 140
With them each day was holy, every hour
They stood prepared to die, a people doom'd
To death ; old men, and youths, and simple maids.
With them each day was holy ; but *that* morn
On which the angel said, 'See where the Lord
Was laid,' joyous arose ; to die that day
Was bliss. Long ere the dawn, by devious ways,
O'er hills, through woods, o'er dreary wastes, they sought
The upland moors, where rivers, there but brooks,
Dispart to different seas : fast by such brooks, 150
A little glen is sometimes scoop'd, a plat
With greensward gay, and flowers that strangers seem
Amid the heathery wild, that all around
Fatigues the eye : in solitudes like these
Thy persecuted children, Scotia, foil'd
A tyrant's and a bigot's bloody laws :
There, leaning on his spear (one of the array
That, in the times of old, had scathed the rose
On England's banner, and had powerless struck
The infatuate monarch and his wavering host, 160
Yet ranged itself to aid his son dethroned),
The lyart veteran heard the word of God
By Cameron thunder'd, or by Renwick pour'd
In gentle stream : then rose the song, the loud

Acclaim of praise ; the wheeling plover ceased 165
 Her plaint ; the solitary place was glad,
 And on the distant cairns, the watcher's ear¹
 Caught doubtfully at times the breeze-borne note.
 But years more gloomy follow'd ; and no more
 The assembled people dared, in face of day, 170
 To worship God, or even at the dead
 Of night, save when the wintry storm raved fierce,
 And thunder-peals compell'd the men of blood
 To couch within their dens ; then dauntlessly
 The scatter'd few would meet, in some deep dell
 By rocks o'er-canopied, to hear the voice,
 Their faithful pastor's voice : he by the gleam
 Of sheeted lightning oped the sacred book,
 And words of comfort spake : over their souls
 His accents soothing came, as to her young 180
 The heathfowl's plumes, when at the close of eve
 She gathers in, mournful, her brood dispersed
 By murderous sport, and o'er the remnant spreads
 Fondly her wings ; close nestling 'neath her breast
 They cherish'd cower amid the purple blooms.

But wood and wild, the mountain and the dale,
 The house of prayer itself, no place inspires
 Emotions more accordant with the day,
 Than does the field of graves, the land of rest :
 Oft at the close of evening-prayer, the toll, 190
 The funeral-toll, announces solemnly
 The service of the tomb ; the homeward crowds
 Divide on either hand : the pomp draws near ;
 The choir to meet the dead go forth, and sing,
 'I am the resurrection and the life.'
 Ah me ! these youthful bearers robed in white,

¹ 'Watcher's ear : ' Sentinels were placed on the surrounding hills, to give warning of the approach of the military.—*Grahame*.

They tell a mournful tale ; some blooming friend 197
 Is gone, dead in her prime of years: 'twas she,
 The poor man's friend, who, when she could not give,
 With angel-tongue pleaded to those who could,
 With angel-tongue and mild beseeching eye,
 That ne'er besought in vain, save when she pray'd
 For longer life, with heart resign'd to die,
 Rejoiced to die ; for happy visions bless'd
 Her voyage's last days,¹ and, hovering round,
 Alighted on her soul, giving presage
 That heaven was nigh.—Oh what a burst
 Of rapture from her lips ! what tears of joy
 Her heavenward eyes suffused ! Those eyes are closed :
 Yet all her loveliness is not yet flown : 210
 She smiled in death, and still her cold pale face
 Retains that smile ; as when a waveless lake,
 In which the wintry stars all bright appear,
 Is sheeted by a nightly frost with ice,
 Still it reflects the face of heaven unchanged,
 Unruffled by the breeze or sweeping blast.
 Again that knell ! The slow procession stops :
 The pall withdrawn, Death's altar, thick-emboss'd
 With melancholy ornaments (the name,
 The record of her blossoming age), appears 220
 Unveil'd, and on it dust to dust is thrown,
 The final rite. Oh ! hark that sullen sound !
 Upon the lower'd bier the shovell'd clay
 Falls fast, and fills the void.—

But who is he
 That stands aloof, with haggard wistful eye,

¹ 'Last days:' Towards the end of Columbus's voyage to the New World, when he was already near, but not in sight of land, the drooping hopes of his mariners (for his own confidence seems to have remained unmoved) were revived by the appearance of birds, at first hovering round the ship, and then lighting on the rigging.—*Grahame*.

As if he coveted the closing grave ? 226
 And he does covet it ; his wish is death :
 The dread resolve is fixed ; his own right hand
 Is sworn to do the deed : the day of rest
 No peace, no comfort, brings his woe-worn spirit ;
 Self-cursed, the hallow'd dome he dreads to enter ;
 He dares not pray ; he dares not sigh a hope ;
 Annihilation is his only heaven.
 Loathsome the converse of his friends ! he shuns
 The human face ; in every careless eye
 Suspicion of his purpose seems to lurk.
 Deep piny shades he loves, where no sweet note
 Is warbled, where the rook unceasing caws :
 Or far in moors, remote from house or hut,
 Where animated nature seems extinct, 240
 Where even the hum of wandering bee ne'er breaks
 The quiet slumber of the level waste ;
 Where vegetation's traces almost fail,
 Save where the leafless cannachs wave their tufts
 Of silky white, or massy oaken trunks
 Half-buried lie, and tell where greenwoods grew—
 There on the heathless moss outstretch'd, he broods
 O'er all his ever-changing plans of death :
 The time, place, means, sweep, like a moonlight rack,
 In fleet succession, o'er his clouded soul— 250
 The poniard ; and the opium draught, that brings
 Death by degrees, but leaves an awful chasm
 Between the act and consequence ; the flash
 Sulphureous, fraught with instantaneous death ;
 The ruin'd tower perch'd on some jutting rock,
 So high that, 'tween the leap and dash below,
 The breath might take its flight in midway air ;
 This pleases for a time ; but on the brink,
 Back from the toppling edge his fancy shrinks

In horror ; sleep at last his breast becalms,— 260
He dreams 'tis done ; but starting wild awakes,
Resigning to despair his dream of joy.

Then hope, faint hope revives—hope that Despair
May to his aid let loose the demon Frenzy,
To lead scared Conscience blindfold o'er the brink
Of Self-destruction's cataract of blood.

Most miserable, most incongruous wretch !
Dar'st thou to spurn thy life, the boon of God,
Yet darest to approach his holy place ?
Oh dare to enter in ! maybe some word, 270
Or sweetly chanted strain, will in thy heart
Awake a chord in unison with life.

What are thy fancied woes to his whose fate
Is (sentence dire !) incurable disease,
The outcast of a lazar-house, homeless,
Or with a home where eyes do scowl on him ?
Yet he, even he, with feeble step draws near,
With trembling voice joins in the song of praise.
Patient he waits the hour of his release ;
He knows he has a home beyond the grave. 280

Or turn thee to that house, with studded doors,
And iron-visor'd windows,—even there
The Sabbath sheds a beam of bliss, though faint ;
The debtor's friends (for still he has some friends)
Have time to visit him ; the blossoming pea,
That climbs the rust-worn bar, seems fresher tinged ;
And on the little turf, this day renew'd,
The lark, his prison mate, quivers the wing
With more than wonted joy. See, through the bars,
That pallid face retreating from the view, 290
That glittering eye following, with hopeless look,
The friends of former years, now passing by
In peaceful fellowship to worship God :

With them, in days of youthful years, he roam'd 294
 O'er hill and dale, o'er broomy knowe ; and wist
 As little as the blithest of the band
 Of this his lot ; condemn'd, condemn'd unheard,
 The party for his judge : among the throng,
 The Pharisaical hard-hearted man
 He sees pass on, to join the heaven-taught prayer, 300
 ' Forgive our debts, as we forgive our debtors :'
 From unforgiving lips most impious prayer !
 Oh happier far the victim, than the hand
 That deals the legal stab ! The injured man
 Enjoys internal, settled calm ; to him
 The Sabbath bell sounds peace ; he loves to meet
 His fellow-sufferers, to pray and praise :
 And many a prayer, as pure as e'er was breathed
 In holy fanes, is sigh'd in prison halls.
 Ah me ! that clank of chains, as kneel and rise 310
 The death-doom'd row. But see, a smile illumines
 The face of some ; perhaps they're guiltless : Oh !
 And must high-minded honesty endure
 The ignominy of a felon's fate ?
 No, 'tis not ignominious to be wrong'd ;
 No ;—conscious exultation swells their hearts,
 To think the day draws nigh, when in the view
 Of angels, and of just men perfect made,
 The mark which rashness branded on their
 names
 Shall be effaced ; when, wafted on life's storm, 320
 Their souls shall reach the Sabbath of the skies ;
 As birds, from bleak Norwegia's wintry coast,
 Blown out to sea, strive to regain the shore,
 But, vainly striving, yield them to the blast,
 Swept o'er the deep to Albion's genial isle,
 Amazed they light amid the bloomy sprays

Of some green vale, there to enjoy new loves, 327
And join in harmony unheard before.

Relentless Justice ! with fate-furrow'd brow !
Wherefore to various crimes, of various guilt, 330
One penalty, the most severe, allot ?
Why, pall'd in state, and mitred with a wreath
Of nightshade, dost thou sit portentously,
Beneath a cloudy canopy of sighs,
Of fears, of trembling hopes, of boding doubts,
Death's dart thy mace ? Why are the laws of God,
Statutes promulg'd in characters of fire,
Despised in deep concerns, where heavenly guidance
Is most required ? The murd'rer—let *him* die,
And him who lifts his arm against his parent, 340
His country, or his voice against his God.
Let crimes less heinous, dooms less dreadful
meet

Than loss of life ! So said the law divine,
That law beneficent, which mildly stretch'd
To the forgotten and forlorn the hand
Of restitution : yes, the trumpet's voice
The Sabbath of the jubilee¹ announced :
The freedom-freighted blast, through all the land
At once, in every city, echoing rings,
From Lebanon to Carmel's woody cliffs, 350
So loud, that far within the desert's verge
The couching lion starts, and glares around.
Free is the bondman now, each one returns

¹ 'And thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years ; and the space of the seven Sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound, on the tenth day of the seventh month ; in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof : it shall be a jubilee unto you : and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.'—*Lev. xxv. 8, 9, 10.*

To his inheritance. The man, grown old 354
In servitude, far from his native fields,
Hastes joyous on his way ; no hills are steep,
Smooth is each rugged path ; his little ones
Sport as they go, while oft the mother chides
The lingering step, lured by the way-side flowers.
At length the hill from which a farewell look, 360
And still another parting look, he threw
On his paternal vale, appears in sight :
The summit gain'd, throbs hard his heart with joy
And sorrow blent, to see that vale once more !
Instant his eager eye darts to the roof
Where first he saw the light ; his youngest born
He lifts, and, pointing to the much loved spot,
Says, ' There thy fathers lived, and there they sleep.'
Onward he wends ; near and more near he draws :
How sweet the tinkle of the palm-bower'd brook ! 370
The sun-beam slanting through the cedar grove
How lovely, and how mild ! but lovelier still
The welcome in the eye of ancient friends,
Scarce known at first ! and dear the fig-tree shade,
' Neath which on Sabbath eve his father told ¹
Of Israel from the house of bondage freed,
Led through the desert to the promised land ;
With eager arms the aged stem he clasps,
And with his tears the furrow'd bark bedews :
And still, at midnight-hour, he thinks he hears 380
The blissful sound that brake the bondman's chains,
The glorious peal of freedom and of joy !

¹ ' And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart : and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.'—*Deut.* vi. 6, 7, 21.

Did ever law of man a power like this 383
Display ? power marvellous as merciful,
Which, though in other ordinances still
Most plainly seen, is yet but little mark'd
For what it truly is—a miracle !
Stupendous, ever new, perform'd at once
In every region, yea, on every sea
Which Europe's navies plough ;—yes, in all lands 390
From pole to pole, or civilised or rude,
People there are to whom the Sabbath morn
Dawns, shedding dews into their drooping hearts :
Yes, far beyond the high-heaved western wave,
Amid Columbia's wildernesses vast,
The words which God in thunder from the mount
Of Sinai spake, are heard, and are obey'd.
Thy children, Scotia, in the desert land,
Driven from their homes by fell Monopoly,
Keep holy to the Lord the seventh day. 400
Assembled under loftiest canopy
Of trees primeval, (soon to be laid low),
They sing, ' By Babel's streams we sat and wept.'
What strong mysterious links enchain the heart
To regions where the morn of life was spent !
In foreign lands, though happier be the clime,
Though round our board smile all the friends we love,
The face of Nature wears a stranger's look.
Yea, though the valley which we loved be swept
Of its inhabitants, none left behind, 410
Not even the poor blind man who sought his bread
From door to door, still, still there is a want ;
Yes, even he, round whom a night that knows
No dawn is ever spread, whose native vale
Presented to his closed eyes a blank,
Deplores its distance now. There well he knew

Each object, though unseen ; there could he wend 417
 His way guideless through wilds and mazy woods ;
 Each aged tree, spared when the forest fell,
 Was his familiar friend, from the smooth birch, 420
 With rind of silken touch, to the rough elm :
 The three gray stones, that marked where heroes
 lay,

Mourn'd by the harp, mourn'd by the melting voice
 Of Cona, oft his resting-place had been :
 Oft had they told him that his home was near :
 The tinkle of the rill, the murmuring
 So gentle of the brook, the torrent's rush,
 The cataract's din, the ocean's distant roar,
 The echo's answer to his foot or voice,
 All spoke a language which he understood, 430
 All warn'd him of his way. But most he feels
 Upon the hallow'd morn the saddening change :
 No more he hears the gladsome village bell
 Ring the bless'd summons to the house of God ;
 And for the voice of psalms, loud, solemn, grand,
 That cheer'd his darkling path, as with slow step
 And feeble he toil'd up the spire-topp'd hill,
 A few faint notes ascend among the trees.

What though the cluster'd vine there hardly tempts
 The traveller's hand ; though birds of dazzling plume 440
 Perch on the loaded boughs ; ' Give me thy woods,
 (Exclaims the banish'd man), thy barren woods,
 Poor Scotland ; sweeter there the reddening haw,
 The sloe, or rowan's¹ bitter bunch, than here
 The purple grape ; more dear the redbreast's note,
 That mourns the fading year in Scotia's vales,
 Than Philomel's, where spring is ever new ;
 More dear to me the redbreast's sober suit,

¹ Mountain-ash.

So like a wither'd leaflet, than the glare 449
Of gaudy wings that make the Iris dim.'

Nor is regret exclusive to the old :
The boy, whose birth was midway o'er the main,
A ship his cradle, by the billows rock'd,
'The nursling of the storm,'—although he claims
No native land, yet does he wistful hear
Of some far distant country still call'd home,
Where lambs of whitest fleece sport on the hills,
Where gold-speck'd fishes wanton in the streams ;
Where little birds, when snowflakes dim the air,
Light on the floor, and peck the table-crumbs, 460
And with their singing cheer the winter day.

But what the loss of country to the woes
Of banishment and solitude combined !
Oh ! my heart bleeds to think there now may live
One hapless man, the remnant of a wreck,
Cast on some desert island of that main
Immense, which stretches from the Cochin shore
To Acapulco. Motionless he sits,
As is the rock his seat, gazing whole days
With wandering eye o'er all the watery waste ; 470
Now striving to believe the albatross
A sail appearing on the horizon's verge ;
Now vowing ne'er to cherish other hope
Than hope of death. Thus pass his weary hours,
Till welcome evening warn him that 'tis time,
Upon the shell-notch'd calendar to mark
Another day, another dreary day—
Changeless—for in these regions of the sun,
The wholesome law that dooms mankind to toil,
Bestowing grateful interchange of rest 480
And labour, is annul'd ; for there the trees,
Adorn'd at once with bud, and flower, and fruit,

Drop, as the breezes blow, a shower of bread 483
 And blossoms on the ground : but yet by him,
 The hermit of the deep, not unobserved
 The Sabbath passes,—'tis his great delight.
 Each seventh eve he marks the farewell ray,
 And loves and sighs to think that setting sun
 Is now empurpling Scotland's mountain-tops,
 Or, higher risen, slants athwart her vales, 490
 Tinting with yellow light the quivering throat
 Of day-spring lark, while woodland birds below
 Chant in the dewy shade. Thus, all night long
 He watches, while the rising moon describes
 The progress of the day in happier lands.
 And now he almost fancies that he hears
 The chiming from his native village church ;
 And now he sings, and fondly hopes the strain
 May be the same that sweet ascends at home
 In congregation full,—where, not without a tear, 500
 They are remember'd who in ships behold
 The wonders of the deep :¹ he sees the hand,
 The widowed hand, that veils the eye suffused :
 He sees his orphan boy look up, and strive
 The widowed heart to soothe. His spirit leans
 On God. Nor does he leave his weekly vigil,
 Though tempests ride o'er welkin-lashing waves
 On winds of cloudless wing ;² though lightnings burst
 So vivid, that the stars are hid and seen
 In awful alternation : calm he views 510
 The far-exploding firmament, and dares
 To hope—one bolt in mercy is reserved
 For his release ; and yet he is resign'd

¹ ' They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters ; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.'—*Psal.* cvii. 23, 24.

—² ' Cloudless wing : ' In the tropical regions, the sky during storms is often without a cloud.—*Grahame.*

To live ; because full well he is assured 514
 Thy hand does lead him, Thy right hand upholds.¹

And Thy right hand does lead him. Lo ! at last,
 One sacred eve, he hears, faint from the deep,
 Music remote, swelling at intervals,
 As if th' embodied spirit of sweet sounds
 Came slowly floating on the shoreward wave : 520
 The cadence well he knows—a hymn of old,
 Where sweetly is rehearsed the lowly state
 Of Jesus, when his birth was first announced,
 In midnight music, by an angel choir,
 To Bethlehem's shepherds, as they watch'd their flocks.
 Breathless, the man forlorn listens, and thinks
 It is a dream. Fuller the voices swell :
 He looks, and starts to see, moving along,
 The semblance of a fiery wave,² in crescent form,
 Approaching to the land ; straightway he sees 530
 A towering whiteness ; 'tis the heaven-fill'd sails
 That waft the mission'd men, who have renounced
 Their homes, their country, nay, almost the world,
 Bearing glad tidings to the furthest isles
 Of ocean, that the dead shall rise again.
 Forward the gleam-girt castle coastwise glides.
 It seems as it would pass away. To cry
 The wretched man in vain attempts, in vain,
 Powerless his voice as in a fearful dream :
 Not so his hand ; he strikes the flint, a blaze 540
 Mounts from the ready heap of wither'd leaves ;

¹ ' If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.' —*Psal.* cxxxix. 9, 10.—² ' Fiery wave . ' ' In some seas, as particularly about the coast of Malabar, as a ship floats along, it seems during the night to be surrounded with fire, and to leave a long tract of light behind it. Whenever the sea is gently agitated, it seems converted into little stars ; every drop, as it breaks, emits light, like bodies electrified in the dark.'—*Darwin*.

The music ceases ; accents harsh succeed, 542
 Harsh, but most grateful ; downward drop the sails ;
 Engulf'd the anchor sinks ; the boat is launch'd ;
 But cautious lies aloof till morning dawn :
 Oh then the transport of the man, unused
 To other human voice beside his own,
 His native tongue to hear ! He breathes at home,
 Though earth's diameter is interposed.
 Of perils of the sea he has no dread, 550
 Full well assured the mission'd bark is safe,
 Held in the hollow of th' Almighty's hand ;
 (And signal Thy deliverances have been
 Of those Thy messengers of peace and joy).
 From storms that loudly threaten to unfix
 Islands rock-rooted in the ocean's bed,
 Thou dost deliver them—and from the calm,
 More dreadful than the storm, when motionless
 Upon the purple deep the vessel lies
 For days, for nights, illumed by phosphor lamps ; 560
 When sea-birds seem in nests of flame to float ;
 When backward starts the boldest mariner
 To see, while o'er the side he leans, his face
 As if deep-tinged with blood.

Let worldly men

The cause and combatants contemptuous scorn,
 And call fanatics them who hazard health
 And life, in testifying of the truth,
 Who joy and glory in the cross of Christ !
 What were the Galilean fishermen
 But messengers commission'd to announce 570
 The resurrection and the life to come ?
 They too, though clothed with power of mighty works
 Miraculous, were oft received with scorn ;
 Oft did their words fall powerless, though enforced

By deeds that mark'd Omnipotence their friend. 575
 But when their efforts fail'd, unweariedly
 They onward went, rejoicing in their course.
 Like helianthus,¹ borne on downy wings
 To distant realms, they frequent fell on soils
 Barren and thankless ; yet oft-times they saw 580
 Their labours crown'd with fruit an hundred-fold,
 Saw the new converts testify their faith
 By works of love, the slave set free, the sick
 Attended, prisoners visited, the poor
 Received as brothers at the rich man's board.
 Alas ! how different now the deeds of men
 Nursed in the faith of Christ !—the free made
 slaves !
 Stolen from their country, borne across the deep,
 Enchain'd, endungeon'd, forced by stripes to live,
 Doom'd to behold their wives, their little ones, 590
 Tremble beneath the white man's fiend-like frown !
 Yet even to scenes like this, the Sabbath brings
 Alleviation of the enormous woe :
 The oft-reiterated stroke is still ;
 The clotted scourge hangs hardening in the shrouds.
 But see, the demon man, whose trade is blood,
 With dauntless front, convene his ruffian crew,
 To hear the sacred service read. Accursed,
 The wretch's bile-tinged lips profane the Word
 Of God : accursed, he ventures to pronounce 600
 The decalogue, nor falters at that law,
 Wherein 'tis written, Thou shalt do no murder.
 Perhaps while yet the words are on his lips,
 He hears a dying mother's parting groan ;

¹ 'Sunflower : ' The seeds of many plants of this kind are furnished with a plume, by which admirable mechanism they are disseminated far from their parent stem.—*Darwin*.

He hears her orphan'd child, with lisping plaint, 605
 Attempt to rouse her from the sleep of death.

O England! England! wash thy purpled hands
 Of this foul sin, and never dip them more
 In guilt so damnable; then lift them up
 In supplication to that God whose name 610
 Is Mercy; then thou may'st, without the risk
 Of drawing vengeance from the surcharged clouds,
 Implore protection to thy menaced shores;
 Then God will blast the tyrant's¹ arm that grasps
 The thunderbolt of ruin o'er thy head;
 Then will he turn the wolfish race to prey
 Upon each other; then will he arrest
 The lava torrent, causing it regorge
 Back to its source with fiery desolation.

Of all the murderous trades by mortals plied, 620
 'Tis War alone that never violates
 The hallow'd day by simulate respect,
 By hypocritic rest: no, no, the work proceeds.
 From sacred pinnacles are hung the flags²
 That give the sign to slip the leash from slaughter;
 The bells³ whose knoll a holy calmness pour'd
 Into the good man's breast, whose sound consoled
 The sick, the poor, the old—perversion dire—
 Pealing with sulph'rous tongue, speak death-fraught words:
 From morn to eve Destruction revels frenzied, 630
 Till at the hour when peaceful vesper-chimes
 Were wont to soothe the ear, the trumpet sounds
 Pursuit and flight altern; and for the song
 Of larks descending to their grass-bower'd homes,
 The croak of flesh-gorged ravens, as they slake

¹ 'Tyrant:' Bonaparte.—² 'Flags:' Church steeples are frequently used as signal-posts.—³ 'Bells:' In revolutionary France, bells were melted into balls.

Their thirst in hoof-prints fill'd with gore, disturbs 636
 The stupor of the dying man : while Death
 Triumphantly sails down th' ensanguined stream,
 On corses throned, and crown'd with shiver'd boughs,
 That erst hung imaged in the crystal tide.¹

And what the harvest of these bloody fields ?
 A double weight of fetters to the slave,
 And chains on arms that wielded Freedom's sword.
 Spirit of Tell ! and art thou doom'd to see
 Thy mountains, that confess'd no other chains
 Than what the wintry elements had forged—
 Thy vales, where Freedom, and her stern compeer,
 Proud virtuous Poverty, their noble state
 Maintain'd, amid surrounding threats of wealth,
 Of superstition, and tyrannic sway— 650
 Spirit of Tell ! and art thou doom'd to see
 That land subdued by Slavery's basest slaves,
 By men whose lips pronounce the sacred name
 Of Liberty, then kiss the despot's foot ?
 Helvetia ! hadst thou to thyself been true,
 Thy dying sons had triumph'd as they fell :
 But 'twas a glorious effort, though in vain.
 Aloft thy Genius, 'mid the sweeping clouds,
 The flag of Freedom spread ; bright in the storm
 The streaming meteor waved, and far it gleam'd ; 660
 But, ah ! 'twas transient as the Iris' arch,
 Glanced from Leviathan's ascending shower,
 When 'mid the mountain waves heaving his head.
 Already had the friendly-seeming foe
 Possess'd the snow-piled ramparts of the land ;
 Down like an avalanche they rolled, they crushed
 The temple, palace, cottage, every work

¹ 'Tide : ' After a heavy cannonade, the shivered branches of trees, and the corpses of the killed, are seen floating together down the rivers.— *Grahame*.

Of art and nature, in one common ruin. 668

The dreadful crash is o'er, and peace ensues—

The peace of desolation, gloomy, still :

Each day is like a Sabbath ; but, alas !

No Sabbath-service glads the seventh day ;

No more the happy villagers are seen,

Winding adown the rock-hewn paths that wont

To lead their footsteps to the house of prayer ;

But, far apart, assembled in the depth

Of solitudes, perhaps a little group

Of aged men, and orphan boys, and maids

Bereft, list to the breathings of the holy man

Who spurns an oath of fealty to the power 680

Of rulers chosen by a tyrant's nod.

No more, as dies the rustling of the breeze,

Is heard the distant vesper-hymn ; no more

At gloaming hour the plaintive strain, that links

His country to the Switzer's heart, delights

The loosening team ; or if some shepherd-boy

Attempt the strain,¹ his voice soon faltering stops ;

He feels his country now a foreign land.

O Scotland ! canst thou for a moment brook

The mere imagination, that a fate 690

Like this can e'er be thine, that o'er those hills,

And dear-bought vales, whence Wallace, Douglas, Bruce,

Repell'd proud Edward's multitudinous hordes,

A Gallic foe, that abject race, should rule ?

No, no ! let never hostile standard touch

Thy shore : rush, rush into the dashing brine,

And crest each wave with steel ; and should the stamp

Of Slavery's footstep violate the strand,

Let not the tardy tide efface the mark ;

Sweep off the stigma with a sea of blood. 700

¹ 'Strain : ' Ranz des Vaches.

But truce with war, at best a dismal theme : 701
Thrice happy he who, far in Scottish glen
Retired, (yet ready at his country's call),
Has left the restless emmet-hill of man !
He never longs to read the saddening tale
Of endless wars ; and seldom does he hear
The tale of woe ; and ere it reaches him,
Rumour, so loud when new, has died away
Into a whisper, on the memory borne
Of casual traveller : as on the deep, 710
Far from the sight of land, when all around
Is waveless calm, the sudden tremulous swell,
That gently heaves the ship, tells, as it rolls,
Of earthquakes dread, and cities overthrown.

O Scotland ! much I love thy tranquil dales ;
But most, on Sabbath eve, when low the sun
Slants through the upland copse, 'tis my delight,
Wandering, and stopping oft, to hear the song
Of kindred praise arise from humble roofs ;
Or when the simple service ends, to hear 720
The lifted latch, and mark the gray-hair'd man,
The father and the priest, walk forth alone
Into his garden-plat or little field,
To commune with his God in secret prayer—
To bless the Lord, that in his downward years
His children are about him ; sweet meantime,
The thrush, that sings upon the aged thorn,
Brings to his view the days of youthful years,
When that same aged thorn was but a bush.

Nor is the contrast between youth and age 730
To him a painful thought ; he joys to think
His journey near a close ; heaven is his home.
More happy far that man, though bowed down,
Though feeble be his gait, and dim his eye,

Than they, the favourites of youth and health, 735
Of riches and of fame, who have renounced
The glorious promise of the life to come,
Clinging to death. Or mark that female face,
The faded picture of its former self,
The garments coarse but clean ; frequent at church, 740
I've noted such a one, feeble and pale,
Yet standing, with a look of mild content,
Till beckon'd by some kindly hand to sit.
She had seen better days ; there was a time
Her hands could earn her bread, and freely give
To those who were in want ; but now old age
And lingering disease have made her helpless.
Yet is she happy, ay, and she is wise,
(Philosophers may sneer, and pedants frown),
Although her Bible be her only book ; 750
And she is rich, although her only wealth
Be recollection of a well-spent life—
Be expectation of the life to come.
Examine here, explore the narrow path
In which she walks ; look not for virtuous deeds
In history's arena, where the prize
Of fame or power prompts to heroic acts.
Peruse the lives themselves of men obscure ;
There charity, that robs itself to give,
There fortitude in sickness nursed by want, 760
There courage that expects no tongue to praise,
There virtue lurks, like purest gold deep-hid,
With no alloy of selfish motive mixed.
The poor man's boon, that stints him of his bread,
Is prized more highly in the sight of Him
Who sees the heart, than golden gifts from hands
That scarce can know their countless treasures less :
Yea, the deep sigh that heaves the poor man's breast

To see distress, and feel his willing arm 769
Palsied by penury, ascends to Heaven,
While ponderous bequests of lands and goods
Ne'er rise above their earthly origin.

And should all bounty that is clothed with power
Be deem'd unworthy? Far be such a thought!
Even when the rich bestow, there are sure tests
Of genuine charity: yes, yes, let wealth
Give other alms than silver or than gold—
Time, trouble, toil, attendance, watchfulness,
Exposure to disease—yes, let the rich
Be often seen beneath the sick man's roof; 780
Or cheering, with inquiries from the heart,
And hopes of health, the melancholy range
Of couches in the public wards of woe:
There let them often bless the sick man's bed,
With kind assurances that all is well
At home, that plenty smiles upon the board,
The while the hand that earn'd the frugal meal
Can hardly raise itself in sign of thanks.
Above all duties, let the rich man search
Into the cause he knoweth not, nor spurn 790
The suppliant wretch as guilty of a crime.

Ye bless'd with wealth! (another name for power
Of doing good), oh would ye but devote
A little portion of each seventh day
To acts of justice to your fellow-men!
The house of mourning silently invites.
Shun not the crowded alley; prompt descend
Into the half-sunk cell, darksome and damp;
Nor seem impatient to be gone: inquire,
Console, instruct, encourage, soothe, assist; 800
Read, pray, and sing a new song to the Lord;
Make tears of joy down grief-worn furrows flow.

O Health ! thou sun of life, without whose beam 803
 The fairest scenes of nature seem involved
 In darkness, shine upon my dreary path
 Once more ; or, with thy faintest dawn, give hope
 That I may yet enjoy thy vital ray :
 Though transient be the hope, 'twill be most sweet,
 Like midnight music, stealing on the ear,
 Then gliding past, and dying slow away. 810
 Music ! thou soothing power, thy charm is proved
 Most vividly when clouds o'ercast the soul,—
 So light displays its loveliest effect
 In lowering skies, when through the murky rack
 A slanting sunbeam shoots, and instant limns
 Th' ethereal curve of seven harmonious dyes,
 Eliciting a splendour from the gloom :
 O Music ! still vouchsafe to tranquillise
 This breast perturb'd ; thy voice, though mournful, soothes ;
 And mournful aye are thy most beauteous lays, 820
 Like fall of blossoms from the orchard boughs,
 The autumn of the spring : enchanting Power !
 Who, by thy airy spell, canst whirl the mind
 Far from the busy haunts of men to vales
 Where Tweed or Yarrow flows ; or, spurning time,
 Recall red Flodden field ; or suddenly
 Transport, with alter'd strain, the deafen'd ear
 To Linden's plain !—But what the pastoral lay,
 The melting dirge, the battle's trumpet-peal,
 Compared to notes with sacred numbers link'd 830
 In union, solemn, grand ! Oh then the spirit,
 Upborne on pinions of celestial sound,
 Soars to the throne of God, and ravish'd hears
 Ten thousand times ten thousand voices rise
 In slow explosion—voices that erewhile
 Were feebly tuned, perhaps, to low-breathed hymns

Of solace in the chambers of the poor, 837
 The Sabbath worship of the friendless sick.

Bless'd be the female votaries,¹ whose days
 No Sabbath of their pious labours prove,
 Whose lives are consecrated to the toil
 Of minist'ring around the uncurtain'd couch
 Of pain and poverty : bless'd be the hands,
 The lovely hands, (for beauty, youth, and grace,
 Are oft conceal'd by Pity's closest veil),
 That mix the cup medicinal, that bind
 The wounds which ruthless warfare and disease
 Have to the loathsome lazar-house consign'd.

Fierce Superstition of the mitred king !
 Almost I could forget thy torch and stake, 850
 When I this blessed sisterhood survey,
 Compassion's priestesses, disciples true
 Of him whose touch was health, whose single word
 Electrified with life the palsied arm,
 Of him who said, 'Take up thy bed, and walk'—
 Of him who cried to Lazarus, 'Come forth.'

And he who cried to Lazarus, 'Come forth,'
 Will, when the Sabbath of the tomb is past,
 Call forth the dead, and reunite the dust
 (Transform'd and purified) to angel souls. 860
 Ecstatic hope ! belief ! conviction firm !
 How grateful 'tis to recollect the time
 When hope arose to faith ! Faintly at first
 The heavenly voice is heard : then by degrees
 Its music sounds perpetual in the heart.
 Thus he, who all the gloomy winter long
 Has dwelt in city-crowds, wandering afield
 Betimes on Sabbath morn, ere yet the spring
 Unfold the daisy's bud, delighted hears

¹ 'Female votaries : ' Beguine nuns.

The first lark's note, faint yet, and short the song, 870
 Check'd by the chill ungenial northern breeze ;
 But, as the sun ascends, another springs,
 And still another soars on loftier wing,
 Till all o'er head, the joyous choir unseen,
 Poised welkin-high, harmonious fills the air,
 As if it were a link 'tween earth and heaven.

SABBATH WALKS.

A SPRING SABBATH WALK.

MOST earnest was his voice ! most mild his look,
 As with raised hands he bless'd his parting flock.
 He is a faithful pastor of the poor ;
 He thinks not of himself ; his Master's words,
 ' Feed, feed my sheep,' are ever at his heart,
 The cross of Christ is aye before his eyes.
 Oh how I love with melted soul to leave
 The house of prayer, and wander in the fields
 Alone ! What though the opening spring be chill !
 What though the lark, check'd in his airy path, 10
 Eke out his song, perch'd on the fallow clod,
 That still o'ertops the blade ! What though no branch
 Have spread its foliage, save the willow wand,
 That dips its pale leaves in the swollen stream !
 What though the clouds oft lower ! their threats but end
 In sunny showers, that scarcely fill the folds
 Of moss-couch'd violet, or interrupt
 The merle's dulcet pipe—melodious bird !
 He, hid behind the milk-white sloe-thorn spray,
 (Whose early flowers anticipate the leaf), 20
 Welcomes the time of buds, the infant year.

Darts from her perch, and to her plumeless brood 20
Bears off the prize. Sad emblem of man's lot !
He, giddy insect, from his native leaf,
(Where safe and happily he might have lurk'd),
Elate upon ambition's gaudy wings,
Forgetful of his origin, and worse,
Unthinking of his end, flies to the stream,
And if from hostile vigilance he 'scape,
Buoyant he flutters but a little while,
Mistakes the inverted image of the sky
For heaven itself, and sinking meets his fate. 30

Now let me trace the stream up to its source
Among the hills ; its runnel by degrees
Diminishing, the murmur turns a tinkle.
Closer and closer still the banks approach,
Tangled so thick with pleaching bramble-shoots,
With brier and hazel branch, and hawthorn-spray,
That, fain to quit the dingle, glad I mount
Into the open air : grateful the breeze
That fans my throbbing temples ! smiles the plain
Spread wide below : how sweet the placid view! 40
But, oh ! more sweet the thought, heart-soothing thought,
That thousands, and ten thousands of the sons
Of toil, partake this day the common joy
Of rest, of peace, of viewing hill and dale,
Of breathing in the silence of the woods,
And blessing Him who gave the Sabbath day.
Yes, my heart flutters with a freer throb
To think that now the townsman wanders forth
Among the fields and meadows, to enjoy
The coolness of the day's decline, to see 50
His children sport around, and simply pull
The flower and weed promiscuous, as a boon
Which proudly in his breast they smiling fix.

Again I turn me to the hill, and trace 54
 The wizard stream, now scarce to be discern'd,
 Woodless its banks, but green with ferny leaves,
 And thinly strew'd with heath-bells up and down.

Now, when the downward sun has left the glens,
 Each mountain's rugged lineaments are traced
 Upon the adverse slope, where stalks gigantic 60
 The shepherd's shadow thrown athwart the chasm,
 As on the topmost ridge he homeward hies.
 How deep the hush ! the torrent's channel dry,
 Presents a stony steep, the echo's haunt.
 But hark a plaintive sound floating along !
 'Tis from yon heath-roof'd shieling ; now it dies
 Away, now rises full ; it is the song
 Which He, who listens to the halleluiahs
 Of choiring Seraphim, delights to hear ;
 It is the music of the heart, the voice 70
 Of venerable age, of guileless youth,
 In kindly circle seated on the ground
 Before their wicker door : Behold the man !
 The grandsire and the saint ; his silvery locks
 Beam in the parting ray ; before him lies,
 Upon the smooth-cropp'd sward, the open Book—
 His comfort, stay, and ever-new delight ;
 While, heedless at a side, the lisping boy
 Fondles the lamb that nightly shares his couch.

AN AUTUMN SABBATH WALK.

WHEN homeward bands their several ways disperse,
 I love to linger in the narrow field
 Of rest, to wander round from tomb to tomb,
 And think of some who silent sleep below.
 Sad sighs the wind that from these ancient elms
 Shakes showers of leaves upon the wither'd grass :

The sere and yellow wreaths, with eddying sweep, 7
Fill up the furrows 'tween the hillock'd graves.
But list that moan ! 'tis the poor blind man's dog,
His guide for many a day, now come to mourn
The master and the friend—conjunction rare !
A man, indeed, he was of gentle soul,
Though bred to brave the deep : the lightning's flash
Had dimm'd, not closed, his mild, but sightless eyes.
He was a welcome guest through all his range ;
(It was not wide) ; no dog would bay at him :
Children would run to meet him on his way,
And lead him to a sunny seat, and climb
His knee, and wonder at his oft-told tales.
Then would he teach the elfins how to plait 20
The rushy cap and crown, or sedgy ship :
And I have seen him lay his tremulous hand
Upon their heads, while silent moved his lips.
Peace to thy spirit, that now looks on me,
Perhaps with greater pity than I felt
To see thee wandering darkling on thy way.

But let me quit this melancholy spot,
And roam where Nature gives a parting smile.
As yet the blue-bells linger on the sod
That copes the sheepfold ring ; and in the woods 30
A second blow of many flowers appears,
Flowers faintly tinged, and breathing no perfume.
But fruits, not blossoms, form the woodland wreath
That circles Autumn's brow : the ruddy haws
Now clothe the half-leaf'd thorn ; the bramble bends
Beneath its jetty load ; the hazel hangs
With auburn bunches, dipping in the stream
That sweeps along, and threatens to o'erflow
The leaf-strewn banks. Oft statue-like I gaze,
In vacancy of thought, upon that stream, 40

And chase, with dreaming eye, the eddying foam, 41
Or rowan's cluster'd branch, or harvest-sheaf,
Borne rapidly adown the dizzying flood.

A WINTER SABBATH WALK.

How dazzling white the snowy scene ! deep, deep
The stillness of the winter Sabbath day,
Not even a footfall heard. Smooth are the fields,
Each hollow pathway level with the plain :
Hid are the bushes, save that here and there
Are seen the topmost shoots of brier or broom.
High-ridged the whirl'd drift has almost reach'd
The powder'd keystone of the churchyard porch.
Mute hangs the hooded bell ; the tombs lie buried ;
No step approaches to the house of prayer. 10

The flickering fall is o'er : the clouds disperse,
And show the sun, hung o'er the welkin's verge,
Shooting a bright but ineffectual beam
On all the sparkling waste. Now is the time
To visit Nature in her grand attire.
Though perilous the mountainous ascent,
A noble recompense the danger brings.
How beautiful the plain stretch'd far below,
Unvaried though it be, save by yon stream
With azure windings, or the leafless wood ! 20
But what the beauty of the plain, compared
To that sublimity which reigns enthroned,
Holding joint rule with solitude divine,
Among yon rocky fells, that bid defiance
To steps the most adventurously bold ?
There silence dwells profound ; or if the cry
Of high-poised eagle break at times the hush,
The mantled echoes no response return.

But let me now explore the deep-sunk dell.

No footprint, save the covey's or the flock's, 30
Is seen along the rill, where marshy springs
Still rear the grassy blade of vivid green.
Beware, ye shepherds, of these treacherous haunts,
Nor linger there too long : the wintry day
Soon closes ; and full oft a heavier fall,
Heap'd by the blast, fills up the shelter'd glen,
While, gurgling deep below, the buried rill
Mines for itself a snow-coved way ! Oh, then,
Your helpless charge drive from the tempting spot,
And keep them on the bleak hill's stormy side, 40
Where night-winds sweep the gathering drift away :
—So the great Shepherd leads the heavenly flock
From faithless pleasures, full into the storms
Of life, where long they bear the bitter blast,
Until at length the vernal sun looks forth,
Bedimm'd with showers : then to the pastures green
He brings them, where the quiet waters glide,
The stream of life, the Siloah of the soul.

THE BIRDS OF SCOTLAND.

PREFACE.

IN the first of the following poems, I have endeavoured to delineate the manners and characters of Birds. Their external appearance I have not attempted to describe, unless sometimes by very slight and hasty touches. What I have written is the result of my own observation. When I consulted books, my object was not information so much as correction ; but as in these pages I have not often travelled beyond the limits of my own knowledge, and as my attention, from my early years, has been insensibly directed to the subject, I may, without arrogance, assert, that when I did consult books, I very seldom found myself either corrected or informed.

Considered as objects of mere amusement and amenity to man, how interesting are the birds of the air ! How various their appearances, their manners, and habits ! How constantly do they present themselves to the eye, and to the

ear ! While the other wild animals are obliged to seek for safety in concealment, the wings of birds are to them a strong tower of defence. To that defence are we indebted for the fearlessness with which they sit, displaying their beautiful plumes, and warbling their melodious notes : and what were the woods without the woodland song, or the fields, uncheered by the aerial notes of the lark !

With the descriptions of birds, I have interspersed delineations of the scenes which they frequent ; and, under that head, I have hazarded some observations on the present mode of laying out grounds. Some opinions which I have shortly, and perhaps crudely, advanced, are copiously and feelingly discussed in a book which every landholder ought to peruse,—I mean Price's 'Essay on the Picturesque.'

'The Birds of Scotland' (a title the promise of which I am sensible is more extensive than the performance) I venture to lay before the public, not as, by any means, a complete work. I offer it not as a treatise, but an essay. It is defective, I am aware, in the general plan, as well as in the different parts. Neither do I give it as a scientific performance: I have studied not so much to convey knowledge, as to please the imagination and warm the heart.

In 'The Biblical Pictures,' I have endeavoured to describe some of those scenes which painters have so successfully presented to the eye. I need hardly say, however, that, by the adoption of this title, I meant not to subject myself to the principles of the art of painting. I have not confined myself to the objects of sight, nor adhered to one point of time. I have often represented a series of incidents ; and, in portraying characters, I have made them speak as well as act.

Some of the months in 'The Rural Calendar' appeared in a newspaper (the *Kelso Mail*) about nine or ten years ago. I have since made several additions and corrections ; but I lay the poem before the public, rather as a faithful sketch, than as a full or finished delineation of the progress of the year.

PART FIRST.

Per virides passim ramos sua tecta volucres
Concelebrant, mulcentque vagis loca sola querelis.

BUCHANAN.

THE woodland song, the various vocal choirs,
That harmonise fair Scotia's streamy vales ;
Their habitations, and their little joys ;
The winged dwellers on the leas, and moors,
And mountain cliffs ; the woods, the streams, themselves,
The sweetly rural, and the savage scene,
Haunts of the plummy tribes, be these my theme !

Come, Fancy, hover high as eagle's wing : 8
Bend thy keen eye o'er Scotland's hills and dales ;
Float o'er her furthest isles ; glance o'er the main ;
Or, in this briery dale, flit with the wren,
From twig to twig ; or, on the grassy ridge,
Low nestle with the lark. Thou, simple bird,
Of all the vocal choir, dwell'st in a home
The humblest ; yet thy morning song ascends
Nearest to heaven, sweet emblem of his song¹
Who sung thee wakening by the daisy's side !

With earliest spring, while yet the wheaten blade
Scarce shoots above the new-fallen shower of snow,
The skylark's note, in short excursion, warbles : 20
Yes ! even amid the day-obscuring fall,
I've marked his wing winnowing the feathery flakes,
In widely-circling horizontal flight.
But, when the season genial smiles, he towers
In loftier poise, with sweeter, fuller pipe,
Cheering the ploughman at his furrow end,
The while he clears the share, or, listening, leans
Upon his paddle-staff, and, with raised hand,
Shadows his half-shut eyes, striving to scan
The songster melting in the flood of light. 30

On tree or bush no lark was ever seen :
The daisied lea he loves, where tufts of grass
Luxuriant crown the ridge ; there, with his mate,
He founds their lowly house, of withered bents,
And coarsest speargrass ; next, the inner work
With finer and still finer fibres lays,
Rounding it curious with his speckled breast.
How strange this untaught art ! it is the gift,
The gift innate of Him, without whose will
Not even a sparrow falleth to the ground. 40

¹ 'His song : ' Burns.

And now the assiduous dam her red-specked treasure 4
From day to day increases, till complete
The wonted number, blithe, beneath her breast,
She cherishes from morn to eve, from eve
To morn shields from the dew, that globuled lies
Upon her mottled plumes : then with the dawn
Upsprings her mate, and wakes her with his song.
His song full well she knows, even when the sun,
High in his morning course, is hailed at once
By all the lofty warblers of the sky : 50
But most his downward-veering song she loves ;
Slow the descent at first, then, by degrees,
Quick, and more quick, till suddenly the note
Ceases ; and, like an arrow-fledge, he darts,
And, softly lighting, perches by her side.

But now no time for hovering welkin-high,
Or downward-gliding strain ; the young have chipp'd,
Have burst the brittle cage, and gaping bills
Claim all the labour of the parent pair.
Ah, labour vain ! the herd-boy long has marked 60
His future prize ; the ascent, and glad return,
Too oft he viewed ; at last, with prying eyes,
He found the spot, and joyful thought he held
The full-ripe young already in his hand,
Or bore them lightly to his broom-roofed bield :
Even now he sits, amid the rushy mead,
Half-hid, and warps the skep with willow rind,
Or rounds the lid, still adding coil to coil,
Then joins the osier hinge : the work complete
Surveying, oft he turns, and much admires, 70
Complacent with himself ; then hies away
With plundering intent. Ah, little think
The harmless family of love, how near
The robber treads ! he stoops, and parts the grass,

And looks with eager eye upon his prey. 75
 Quick round and round the parents fluttering wheel,
 Now high, now low, and utter shrill the plaint
 Of deep distress. But soon forgot their woe !
 Not so with man ; year after year he mourns,
 Year after year the mother weeps her son, 80
 Torn from her struggling arms by ruffian grasp,
 By robbery legalised.

Low in a glen,
 Down which a little stream had furrowed deep,
 'Tween meeting birchen boughs, a shelvy channel,
 And brawling mingled with the western tide ;
 Far up that stream, almost beyond the roar
 Of storm-bulged breakers, foaming o'er the rocks
 With furious dash, a lowly dwelling lurked,
 Surrounded by a cirlet of the stream.
 Before the wattled door, a greensward plat, 90
 With daisies gay, pastured a playful lamb ;
 A pebbly path, deep-worn, led up the hill
 Winding among the trees, by wheel untouched,
 Save when the winter fuel was brought home,
 One of the poor man's yearly festivals.
 On every side it was a sheltered spot,
 So high and suddenly the woody steeps
 Arose. One only way, downward the stream,
 Just o'er the hollow, 'tween the meeting boughs,
 The distant wave was seen, with, now and then, 100
 The glimpse of passing sail ; but, when the breeze
 Crested the distant wave, this little nook
 Was all so calm, that on the limberest spray,
 The sweet bird chanted motionless, the leaves
 At times scarce fluttering. Here dwelt a pair,
 Poor, humble, and content : one son alone,
 Their William, happy lived at home to bless

Their downward years ; he, simple youth, 108
With boyish fondness, fancied he would love
A seaman's life, and with the fishers sailed,
To try their ways, far 'mong the western isles,
Far as St Kilda's rock-walled shore abrupt,
O'er which he saw ten thousand pinions wheel
Confused, dimming the sky. These dreary shores
Gladly he left ; he had a homeward heart :
No more his wishes wander to the waves.
But still he loves to cast a backward look,
And tell of all he saw, of all he learned ;
Of pillar'd Staffa, lone Iona's isle,
Where Scotland's kings are laid ; of Lewis, Skye, 120
And of the mainland mountain-circled lochs ;
And he would sing the rowers' timing chant,
And chorus wild. Once on a summer's eve,
When low the sun behind the highland hills
Was almost set, he sung that song, to cheer
The aged folks : upon the inverted quern
The father sat ; the mother's spindle hung
Forgot, and backward twirled the half-spun thread ;
Listening with partial well-pleased look, she gazed
Upon her son, and inly bless'd the Lord 130
That he was safe return'd. Sudden a noise
Bursts rushing through the trees ; a glance of steel
Dazzles the eye, and fierce the savage band
Glare all around, then single out their prey.
In vain the mother clasps her darling boy,
In vain the sire offers their little all :
William is bound ; they follow to the shore,
Implore, and weep, and pray ; knee-deep they stand,
And view in mute despair the boat recede.
But let me quit this scene, and bend my way 140
Back to the inland vales, and up the heights,

(Erst by the plough usurp'd), where now the heath, 142
Thin scatter'd up and down, blooming begins
To reappear : stillness, heart-soothing, reigns,
Save, now and then, the partridge's late call ;
Featly athwart the ridge she runs, now seen,
Now in the furrow hid ; then, screaming, springs,
Joined by her mate, and to the grass-field flies :
There, 'neath the blade, rudely she forms
Her shallow nest, humble as is the lark's, 150
But thrice more numerous her freckled store.
Careful she turns them to her breast, and soft,
With lightest pressure sits, scarce to be moved ;
Yes, she will sit, regardless of the scythe,
That nearer, and still nearer, sweep by sweep,
Levels the swarth : bold with a mother's fears,
She, faithful to the last, maintains her post,
And, with her blood, sprinkles a deeper red
Upon the falling blossoms of the field ;
While others, of her kind, content to haunt 160
The upland ferny braes, remote from man,
Behold a plenteous brood burst from the shell,
And run ; but soon, poor helpless things, return,
And crowd beneath the fond inviting breast,
And wings outstretching, quivering with delight.
They grow apace ; but still not far they range,
Till on their pinions plumes begin to shoot ;
Then, by the wary parents led, they dare
To skirt the earing crofts ; at last, full fledged,
They try their timorous wings, bending their flight 170
Home to their natal spot, and pant amid the ferns.
Oft by the side of sheep-fold, on the ground
Bared by the frequent hoof, they love to lie
And bask. Oh, I would never tire to look
On such a scene of peacefulness as this !

But nearer as I draw, with cautious step, 176
Curious to mark their ways, at once alarm'd,
They spring ; the startled lambs, with bickering haste,
Flee to their mother's side, and gaze around :
Far o'er yon whins the covey wing their way, 180
And, wheeling round the broomy knowe, elude
My following eye. Fear not, ye harmless race,
In me no longer shall ye find a foe !
Even when each pulse beat high with bounding health,
Ere yet the stream of life, in sluggish flow,
Began to flag, and prematurely stop
With ever-boding pause, even then my heart
Was never in the sport ; even then I felt,
Pleasure from pain was pleasure much alloy'd.

Alas, he comes ! yes, yonder comes your foe, 190
With sure determined eye, and in his hand
The two-fold tube, form'd for a double death.
Full soon his spaniel, ranging far and wide,
Will lead his footsteps to the very spot,
The covert thick, in which, falsely secure,
Ye lurking sit, close huddled, wing to wing :
Yes, near and nearer still the spaniel draws,
Retracing oft, and crossing oft his course,
Till, all at once, scent-struck, with pendent tongue,
And lifted paw, stiffen'd he panting stands. 200
Forward, encouraged by the sportsman's voice,
He hesitating creeps ; when, flush, the game
Upsprings, and from the levell'd turning tubes,
The glance, once and again, bursts through the smoke.

Nor, 'mid the rigours of the wintry day,
Does savage man the enfeebled pinion spare ;
Then not for sport, but bread, with hawk-like eye,
That needs no setter's aid, the fowler gaunt
Roams in the snowy fields, and downward looks,

Tracing the triple claw, that leads him on, 210
 Oft looking forward, to some thawing spring,
 Where, 'mid the wither'd rushes, he discerns
 His destined prey ; sidelong he stooping steps,
 Wary, and, with a never-erring aim,
 Scatters the flock wide fluttering in the snow ;
 The purpled snow records the cruel deed.

With earliest spring, while yet in mountain cleughs
 Lingers the frozen wreath, when yeanling lambs,
 Upon the little heath-encircled patch
 Of smoothest sward, totter, the gorcock's ¹ call 220
 Is heard from out the mist, high on the hill ;
 But not till when the tiny heather bud
 Appears are struck the spring-time leagues of love.
 Remote from shepherd's hut, or trampled fold,
 The new-joined pair their lowly mansion pitch,
 Perhaps beneath the juniper's rough shoots ;
 Or castled on some plat of tufted heath,
 Surrounded by a narrow sable moat
 Of swampy moss. Within the fabric rude,
 Or e'er the new moon waxes to the full, 230
 The assiduous dam eight spotted spheroids sees,
 And feels beneath her heart, fluttering with joy.
 Nor long she sits, till, with redoubled joy,
 Around her she beholds an active brood
 Run to and fro, or through her covering wings
 Their downy heads look out ; and much she loves
 To pluck the heather crops, not for herself,
 But for their little bills. Thus by degrees,
 She teaches them to find the food which God
 Has spread for them amid the desert wild, 240
 And seeming barrenness. Now they essay
 Their full-plumed wings, and, whirring, spurn the ground ;

¹ 'Gorcock : ' red game or moorcock.

But soon alight fast by yon moss-grown cairn, 243
Round which the berries blae (a beauteous tint
Of purple, deeper dyed with darkest blue)
Lurk 'mid the small round leaves. Enjoy the hour,
While yet ye may, ye unoffending flock !
For not far distant now the bloody morn
When man's protection, selfishly bestow'd,
Shall be withdrawn, and murder roam at will. 250

Low in the east, the purple tinge of dawn
Steals upward o'er the clouds that overhang
The welkin's verge. Upon the mountain side,
The wakening covey quit their mother's wing,
And spread around : lost in the mist,
They hear her call, and, quick returning, bless
A mother's eye. Meantime, the sportsman keen
Comes forth ; and, heedless of the winning smile
Of infant day, pleading on mercy's side,
Anticipates, with eager joy, the sum 260
Of slaughter, that, ere evening hour, he'll boast
To have achieved ; and many a gory wing,
Ere evening hour, exultingly he sees,
Drop, fluttering, 'mid the heath, even 'mid the bush,
Beneath whose blooms the brooding mother sat,
Till round her she beheld her downy young.

At last mild twilight veils the insatiate eye,
And stops the game of death. The frequent shot
Resounds no more : silence again resumes
Her lonely reign ; save that the mother's call 270
Is heard repeated oft, a plaintive note !
Mournful she gathers in her brood, dispersed
By savage sport, and o'er the remnant spreads
Fondly her wings ; close nestling 'neath her breast,
They cherish'd cower amid the purple blooms.
While thus the heathfowl covey, day by day,

Is lessen'd, till, perhaps, one drooping bird 277
Survives, the plover safe her airy scream
Circling repeats, then to a distance flies,
And, querulous, still returns, importunate ;
Yet still escapes, unworthy of an aim.
Amid the marsh's rushy skirts, her nest
Is slightly strewn ; four eggs, of olive hue,
Spotted with black, she broods upon : her young,
Soon as disumber'd of the fragile shell,
Run lively round their dam. She, if or dog
Or man intrude upon her bleak domain,
Skims, clamouring loud, close at their feet, with wing
Stooping, as if impeded by a wound ;
Meantime her young, among the rush-roots, lurk 290
Secure. Ill-omen'd bird ! oft in the times
When monarchs own'd no sceptre but the sword,
Far in the heathy waste, that stretches wide
From Avendale to Loudon's high-coned hill,
Thou, hovering o'er the panting fugitive,
Through dreary moss and moor, hast screaming led
The keen pursuer's eye : oft hast thou hung,
Like a death flag, above the assembled throng,
Whose lips hymn'd praise, their right hands at their hilts ;
Who, in defence of conscience, freedom, law, 300
Look'd stern, with unaverted eyes, on death
In every form of horror. Bird of woe !
Even to the tomb thy victims, by thy wing,
Were haunted ; o'er the bier thy direful cry
Was heard, while murderous men rush'd furious on,
Profaned the sacred presence of the dead,
And fill'd the grave with blood. At last, nor friend,
Nor father, brother, comrade, dares to join
The train, that frequent winds adown the heights.
By feeble female hands the bier is borne, 310

While on some neighbouring cairn the aged sire 311
 Stands bent, his gray locks waving in the blast.
 But who is she that lingers by the sod,
 When all are gone ? 'Tis one who was beloved
 By him who lies below. Ill-omen'd bird !
 She never will forget, never forget,
 Thy dismal soughing wing, and doleful cry.

Amid these woodless wilds, a small round lake
 I've sometimes mark'd, girt by a spongy sward
 Of lively green, with here and there a flower¹ 320
 Of deep-tinged purple, firmly stalk'd, of form
 Pyramidal, the shores bristling with reeds,
 That midway over wade, and, as they bend,
 Disclose the water lily, dancing light
 On waves soft-rippled by the July gale ;
 Hither the long and soft-bill'd snipe resorts,
 By suction nourish'd ; here her house she forms ;
 Here warms her fourfold offspring into life.
 Alas, not long her helpless offspring feel
 Her fostering warmth ; though suddenly she mounts, 330
 Her rapid rise and vacillating flight
 In vain defend her from the fowler's aim.

But let me to the vale once more descend,
 And mingle with the woodland choir, and join
 Their various song, and celebrate with them
 The woods, the rocks, the streams, the bosky bourne,
 The thorny dingle, and the open glade ;
 For 'tis not in their song, nor in their plumes,
 Nor in their wondrous ways, that all their charm
 Consists ; no, 'tis the grove, their dwelling-place, 340
 That lends them half their charm, that still is link'd,
 By strong association's half-seen chain,
 With their sweet song, wherever it is sung.

¹ ' A flower : ' Pyramidal orchis.

And while this lovely, this congenial theme, 344
I slightly touch, oh, may I ne'er forget,
Nature, thy laws! be this my steady aim
To vindicate simplicity; to drive
All affectation from the rural scene.

There are who having seen some lordly pile,
Surrounded by a sea of lawn, attempt, 350
Within their narrow bounds, to imitate
The noble folly. Down the double row
Of venerable elms is hewn. Down crash,
Upon the grass, the orchard trees, whose sprays,
Enwreath'd with blooms, and waved by gentlest gales,
Would lightly at the shaded window beat,
Breaking the morning's slumbers with delight,
Vernal delight. The ancient moss-coped wall,
Or hedge impenetrable, interspersed
With holly evergreen, the domicile 360
Of many a little wing, is swept away;
While, at respectful distance, rises up
The red brick-wall, with flues, and chimney tops,
And many a leafy crucifix adorn'd.
Extends the level lawn with dropping trees
New planted, dead at top, each to a post
Fast-collar'd, culprit like. The smooth expanse
Well cropt, and daily, as the owner's chin,
Not one irregularity presents,
Not even one grassy tuft, in which a lark 370
Might find a home, and cheer the dull domain:
Around the whole, a line vermicular
Of melancholy fir, and leaning larch,
And shivering poplar, skirting the way-side,
Is thinly drawn. But should the tasteful power,
Pragmatic, which presides, with pencilling hand
And striding compasses, o'er all this change,

Get in his thrall some hapless stream, that lurks 378
 Wimpling through hazelly shaw and broomy glen,
 Instant the axe resounds through all the dale,
 And many a pair, unhoused, hovering lament
 The barbarous devastation : all is smoothed,
 Save here and there a tree ; the hawthorn, brier,
 The hazel bush, the bramble, and the broom,
 The sloe-thorn, Scotia's myrtle, all are gone ;
 And on the well-sloped bank arise trim clumps,
 Some round and some oblong, of shrubs exotic,
 A wilderness of poisons, precious deem'd
 In due proportion to their ugliness.

What though fair Scotland's valleys rarely vaunt 390
 The oak majestic, whose aged boughs
 Darken a roodbreadth ! yet nowhere is seen
 More beautifully profuse wild underwood ;
 Nowhere 'tis seen more beautifully profuse
 Than on thy tangling banks, well-wooded Esk,
 And, Borthwick, thine, above that fairy nook
 Form'd by your blending streams. The hawthorn there,
 With moss and lichen gray, dies of old age,
 No steel profane permitted to intrude :
 Up to the topmost branches climbs the rose, 400
 And mingles with the fading blooms of May ;
 While round the brier the honeysuckle wreaths
 Entwine, and, with their sweet perfume, embalm
 The dying rose : a never-failing blow,
 From spring to fall, expands ; the sloe-thorn white,
 As if a flaky shower the leafless sprays
 Had hung ; the hawthorn, May's fair diadem ;
 The whin's rich dye ; the bonny broom ; the rasp
 Erect ; the rose, red, white, and faintest pink ;
 And long extending bramble's flowery shoots. 410
 The bank ascend ; an open height appears,

Between the double streams that wind below : 412
 Look round ; behold a prospect wide and fair ;
 The Lomond hills, with Fife's town-skirted shore,
 The intervening sea, Inchkeith's gray rocks,
 With beacon-turret crown'd ; Arthur's proud crest,
 And Salisbury abrupt ; the Pentland range,
 Now peak'd, and now, with undulating swell,
 Heaved to the clouds. More near, upon each hand,
 The sloping woods bulging into the glade, 420
 Receding then with easy artless curve.
 Behind, a grove, of ancient trees, surrounds
 The ruins of a blood-cemented house,
 Half prostrate laid, as ever ought to lie
 The tyrant's dwelling. There no martin builds
 Her airy nest ; not even the owl alights
 On these unhallow'd walls. The murderer's head
 Was shelter'd by these walls ; hands blood-embued
 Founded these walls—Mackenzie's¹ purpled hands !
 Perfidious minion of a sceptred priest ! 430
 The huge enormity of crime on crime,
 Accumulated high, but ill conceals
 The reptile meanness of thy dastard soul ;
 Whose favourite art was lying with address,
 Whose hollow promise help'd the princely hand
 To screw confessions from the tortured lips.
 Base hypocrite ! thy character, portray'd
 By modern history's too lenient touch,
 Truth loves to blazon with her real tints,
 To limn of new thy half-forgotten name, 440
 Inscribe with infamy thy time-worn tomb,
 And make the memory hated as the man.

But better far truth loves to paint yon house
 Of humbler wall, half stone, half turf ; with roof

¹ ' Mackenzie : ' Sir George the ' Bluidye Mackenzie.'

Of mended thatch, the sparrow's warm abode ; 445
The wisp-wound chimney, with its rising wreath ;
The sloping garden, fill'd with useful herbs,
Yet not without its rose ; the patch of corn
Upon the brow ; the blooming vetchy ridge.
But most the aged man, now wandering forth,
I love to view ; for 'neath yon homely guise
Dwell worth, and simple dignity, and sense,
Politeness natural, that puts to shame
The world's grimace, and kindness crowning all.
Why should the falsely great, the glittering names,
Engross the Muse's praise ? My humble voice
They ne'er engross'd, and never shall : I claim
The title of the poor man's bard : I dare
To celebrate an unambitious name ;

And thine, Kilgour, may yet some few years live, 460
When low thy reverend locks mix with the mould.

Even in a bird, the simplest notes have charms
For me : I even love the yellow-hammer's song.
When earliest buds begin to bulge, his note,
Simple, reiterated oft, is heard
On leafless brier, or half-grown hedgerow tree ;
Nor does he cease his note till autumn's leaves
Fall fluttering round his golden head so bright.
Fair plumaged bird ! cursed by the causeless hate
Of every schoolboy, still by me thy lot 470
Was pitied ! never did I tear thy nest :
I loved thee, pretty bird ! for 'twas thy nest
Which first, unhelp'd by older eyes, I found.
The very spot I think I now behold !
Forth from my low-roof'd home I wander'd blithe,
Down to thy side, sweet Cart, where, 'cross the stream,
A range of stones, below a shallow ford,
Stood in the place of the now spanning arch ;

Up from that ford a little bank there was, 479
 With alder-copse and willow overgrown,
 Now worn away by mining winter floods ;
 There, at a bramble-root, sunk in the grass,
 The hidden prize, of wither'd field-straws form'd,
 Well lined with many a coil of hair and moss,
 And in it laid five red-vein'd spheres, I found.
 The Syracusan's¹ voice did not exclaim
 The grand 'Eureka' with more rapturous joy,
 Than at that moment flutter'd round my heart.

How simply unassuming is that strain !
 It is the redbreast's song, the friend of man. 490
 High is his perch, but humble is his home,
 And well conceal'd. Sometimes within the sound
 Of heartsome mill-clack, where the spacious door,
 White-dusted, tells him plenty reigns around,
 Close at the root of brier-bush, that o'erhangs
 The narrow stream, with shealings bedded white,
 He fixes his abode, and lives at will.
 Oft near some single cottage, he prefers
 To rear his little home ; there, pert and spruce,
 He shares the refuse of the goodwife's churn, 500
 Which kindly on the wall for him she leaves :
 Below her lintel oft he lights, then in
 He boldly flits, and fluttering loads his bill,
 And to his young the yellow treasure bears.

Not seldom does he neighbour the low roof
 Where tiny elves are taught : a pleasant spot
 It is, well fenced from winter blast, and screen'd,
 By high o'erspreading boughs, from summer sun.
 Before the door a sloping green extends
 No further than the neighbouring cottage-hedge, 510
 Beneath whose bourtree shade a little well

¹ 'Syracusan:' Archimedes.

Is scoop'd, so limpid that its guardian trout 512
 (The wonder of the lesser stooping wights)
 Is at the bottom seen. At noontide hour,
 The imprison'd throng, enlarged, blithesome rush forth
 To sport the happy interval away ;
 While those from distance come, upon the sward,
 At random seated, loose their little stores :
 In midst of them poor redbreast hops unharm'd,
 For they have read, or heard, and wept to hear, 520
 The story of the Children in the Wood ;
 And many a crumb to robin they will throw.
 Others there are that love, on shady banks
 Retired, to pass the summer days : their song,
 Among the birchen boughs, with sweetest fall,
 Is warbled, pausing, then resumed more sweet,
 More sad ; that, to an ear grown fanciful,
 The babes, the wood, the man, rise in review,
 And robin still repeats the tragic line.
 But should the note of flute, or human voice, 530
 Sound through the grove, the madrigal at once
 Ceases ; the warbler flits from branch to branch,
 And, stooping, sidelong turns his listening head.

Ye lovers of his song, the greenwood path
 Each morn duly bestrew with a few crumbs :
 His friendship thus ye'll gain ; till, by degrees,
 Alert, even from your hand, the offer'd boon
 He'll pick, half trustingly. Yes, I have seen
 Him, and his mate, attend, from tree to tree,
 My passing step ; and, from my open hand, 540
 The morsel pick, timorous, and starting back,
 Returning still, with confidence increased.

What little birds, with frequent shrillest chirp,
 When honeysuckle flowers succeed the rose,
 The inmost thicket haunt ?—their tawny breasts,

Spotted with black, bespeak the youngling thrush, 546
Though less in size ; it is the redbreast's brood,
New flown, helpless, with still the downy tufts
Upon their heads. But soon their full fledged wings,
Long hesitating, quivering oft, they stretch :
At last, encouraged by the parent voice,
And leading flight, they reach the nearest bush,
Or, falling short, lie panting on the ground ;
But, reassured, the destined aim attain.
Nor long this helpless state : each day adds strength,
Adds wisdom, suited to their little sphere,
Adds independence—first of heavenly boons !

Released from all the duties, all the cares,
The keen, yet sweet solitudes, that haunt
The parent's breast, again the redbreast's song 560
Trills from the wood, or from the garden bough.
Each season in its turn he hails ; he hails,
Perch'd on the naked tree, Spring's earliest buds :
At morn, at chilly eve, when the March sun
Sinks with a wintry tinge, and Hesper sheds
A frosty light, he ceases not his strain :
And when staid Autumn walks with rustling tread,
He mourns the falling leaf. Even when each branch
Is leafless, and the harvest morn has clothed
The fields in white, he, on the hoar-plumed spray, 570
Delights, dear trustful bird ! his future host.

But farewell lessening days, in summer smile
Array'd. Dark winter's frown comes like a cloud,
Whose shadow sweeps a mountain side, and scowls
O'er all the land. Now warm stack-yards, and barns,
Busy with bouncing flails, are robin's haunts.
Upon the barn's half-door he doubting lights,
And inward peeps. But truce, sweet social bird !
So well I love the strain, when thou'rt my theme,

That now I almost tread the winter snows, 580
While many a vernal song remains unsung.

When snowdrops die, and the green primrose leaves
Announce the coming flower, the merle's note,
Mellifluous, rich, deep-toned, fills all the vale,
And charms the ravish'd ear. The hawthorn bush,
New-budded, is his perch ; there the gray dawn
He hails ; and there, with parting light, concludes
His melody. There, when the buds begin
To break, he lays the fibrous roots ; and, see,
His jetty breast embrown'd ; the rounded clay 590
His jetty breast has soil'd : but now complete,
His partner, and his helper in the work,
Happy assumes possession of her home ;
While he, upon a neighbouring tree, his lay,
More richly full, melodiously renews.

When twice seven days have run, the moment snatch,
That she has flitted off her charge, to cool
Her thirsty bill, dipp'd in the babbling brook,
Then silently, on tiptoe raised, look in,
Admire : five cupless acorns, darkly speck'd, 600
Delight the eye, warm to the cautious touch.

In seven days more expect the fledgless young,
Five gaping bills. With busy wing, and eye
Quick-darting, all alert, the parent pair
Gather the sustenance which Heaven bestows.
But music ceases, save at dewy fall
Of eve, when, nestling o'er her brood, the dam
Has still'd them all to rest ; or at the hour
Of doubtful dawning gray ; then from his wing
Her partner turns his yellow bill, and chants 610
His solitary song of joyous praise.

From day to day, as blow the hawthorn flowers,
That canopy this little home of love,

The plumage of the younglings shoots and spreads, 614
 Filling with joy the fond parental eye.

Alas ! not long the parents' partial eye
 Shall view the fledging wing ; ne'er shall they see
 The timorous pinion's first essay at flight.

The truant schoolboy's eager, bleeding hand,
 Their house, their all, tears from the bending bush ; 620
 A shower of blossoms mourns the ruthless deed !

The piercing anguish'd note, the brushing wing,
 The spoiler heeds not ; triumphing, his way
 Smiling he wends : the ruin'd, hopeless pair,
 O'er many a field follow his townward steps,
 Then back return ; and, perching on the bush,
 Find nought of all they loved, but one small tuft
 Of moss, and withered roots. Drooping they sit,
 Silent : afar at last they fly, o'er hill

And lurid moor, to mourn in other groves, 630
 And soothe, in gentler grief, their hapless lot.

Meantime the younger victims, one by one,
 Drop off, by care destroy'd, and food unfit.
 Perhaps one, hardier than the rest, survives,
 And 'tween the wicker bars, with fading weeds
 Entwined, hung at some lofty window, hops
 From stick to stick his small unvaried round ;
 While opposite, but higher still, the lark
 Stands fluttering, or runs o'er his narrow field,
 A span-breadth turf, tawny and parched, with
 wings 640

Quivering, as if to fly ; his carol gay
 Lightening the pale mechanic's tedious task.
 Poor birds, most sad the change ! of daisied fields,
 Of hawthorn blooming sprays, of boundless air,
 With melody replete, for clouds of smoke,
 Through which the daw flies cawing steeple high ;

Or creak of grinding wheels, or skillet tongue, 647
Shrilly reviling, more discordant still !

But what *their* wretchedness, parents or young,
Compared to that which wrings the human breast,
Doomed to lament a loss, than death more dire—
The robbery of a child ! Ay, there is wretchedness !
Snatch'd playful from the rosy bank, by hands
Inured to crimes, the innocent is borne
Far, far away. Of all the varying forms
Of human woe, this the most dire ! To think
He might have been now sporting at your side,
But that, neglected, he was left a prey
To pirate hands ! To think how he will shudder,
To see a hideous, haggard face attempt 650
To smile away his tears, caressing him
With horrible embrace, the while he calls
Aloud, in vain, to you ! Nor does even time,
Assuager of all other woes, bring balm
To this : each child, to boyish years grown up,
Reminds you of your boy ! He might have been
Like this, fair, blooming, modest, looking down
With most engaging bashfulness : but now,
Instead of this, perhaps, with sable mask
Begrimed, he feebly totters 'neath a load, 670
More fitted to his cruel master's strength.
Perhaps, to manhood come, allured to sell
His life, his freedom, for some paltry pounds,
He now lies 'mong the number'd, nameless crowd
That groan on gory fields, envying the dead !
Or, still more dreadful fate ! dragged, train'd, con-
pell'd,
To vice, to crimes, death-sentenced crimes, perhaps
Among those miserable names, which blot
The calendar of death, *his* is inscribed !

How much alike in habits, form, and size, 680
The merle and the mavis!¹ how unlike
In plumage and in song! The thrush's song
Is varied as his plumes; and as his plumes
Blend beauteous, each with each, so run his notes
Smoothly, with many a happy rise and fall.
How prettily, upon his parded breast,
The vividly contrasted tints unite
To please the admiring eye; so, loud and soft,
And high and low, all in his notes combine,
In alternation sweet, to charm the ear. 690

Full earlier than the blackbird he begins
His vernal strain. Regardless of the frown
Which winter casts upon the vernal day,
Though snowy flakes melt in the primrose cup,
He, warbling on, awaits the sunny beam,
That mild gleams down, and spreads o'er all the grove.
But now his song a partner for him gains;
And in the hazel bush, or sloe, is formed
The habitation of the wedded pair:
Sometimes below the never-fading leaves 700
Of ivy close, that overtwisting binds,
And richly crowns, with cluster'd fruit of spring,
Some riven rock, or nodding castle wall;
Sometimes beneath the jutting root of elm,
Or oak, among the sprigs, that overhang
A pebble-chiding stream, the loam-lined house
Is fix'd, well hid from ken of hovering hawk,
Or lurking beast, or schoolboy's prowling eye;
Securely there the dam sits all day long,
While from the adverse bank, on topmost shoot 710
Of odour-breathing birch, her mate's blithe chant
Cheers her pent hours, and makes the wild woods ring.

¹ 'Mavis:' thrush.

Grudge not, ye owners of the fruited boughs, 713
That he should pay himself for that sweet music,
With which, in blossom time, he cheers your hearts !
Scare, if ye will, his timid wing away,
But, oh, let not the leaden viewless shower,
Vollied from flashing tube, arrest his flight,
And fill his tuneful, gasping bill with blood !

These two, all others of the singing choirs 720
In size surpass. A contrast now behold :
The little woodland dwarf, the tiny wren,
That from the root-sprigs trills her ditty clear.
Of stature most diminutive herself,
Not so her wondrous house ; for, strange to tell !
Hers is the largest structure that is formed
By tuneful bill and breast. 'Neath some old root,
From which the sloping soil, by wintry rains,
Has been all worn away, she fixes up
Her curious dwelling, close, and vaulted o'er, 730
And in the side a little gateway porch,
In which (for I have seen) she'll sit and pipe
A merry stave of her shrill roundelay.
Nor always does a single gate suffice
For exit and for entrance to her dome ;
For when (as sometimes haps) within a bush
She builds the artful fabric, then each side
Has its own portico. But, mark within !
How skilfully the finest plumes and downs
Are softly warp'd ; how closely all around 740
The outer layers of moss ! each circumstance
Most artfully contrived to favour warmth !
Here read the reason of the vaulted roof ;
Here Providence compensates, ever kind,
The enormous disproportion that subsists
Between the mother and the numerous brood,

Which her small bulk must quicken into life. 747
 Fifteen white spherules, small as moorland hare-bell,
 And prettily bespeck'd like foxglove flower
 Complete her number. Twice five days she sits,
 Fed by her partner, never flitting off,
 Save when the morning sun is high, to drink
 A dewdrop from the nearest flow'ret cup.

But now behold the greatest of this train
 Of miracles, stupendously minute ;
 The numerous progeny, clamant for food,
 Supplied by two small bills, and feeble wings
 Of narrow range ; supplied, ay, duly fed,
 Fed in the dark, and yet not one forgot !

When whinny braes are garlanded with gold, 760
 And, blithe, the lamb pursues, in merry chase,
 His twin around the bush, the linnet then
 Within the prickly fortress builds her bower,
 And warmly lines it round, with hair and wool
 Inwove. Sweet minstrel, may'st thou long delight
 The whinny knowe, and broomy brae, and bank
 Of fragrant birch ! May never fowler's snare
 Tangle thy struggling foot ! Or, if thou'rt doom'd
 Within the narrow cage thy dreary days
 To pine, may ne'er the glowing wire (oh, crime accursed !)
 Quench, with fell agony, thy shrivelling eye ! 771
 Deprived of air and freedom, shall the light
 Of day, thy only pleasure, be denied ?
 But thy own song will still be left ; with it,
 Darkling, thou'lt soothe the lingering hours away ;
 And thou wilt learn to find thy triple perch,
 Thy seed-box, and thy beverage saffron-tinged.
 Nor is thy lot more hard than that which they
 (Poor linnets !) prove in many a storied pile :¹

¹ ' Storied pile : ' The allusion here is chiefly to cotton-mills.—*Grahame*.

They see the light, 'tis true—they see, and know 780
That light for *them* is but an implement
Of toil. In summer with the sun they rise
To toil, and with his setting beam they cease
To toil : nor does the shorten'd winter day
Their toil abridge ; for, ere the cock's first crow,
Aroused to toil, they lift their heavy eyes,
And force their childish limbs to rise and toil ;
And while the winter night, by cottage fire,
Is spent in homebred industry, relieved
By harmless glee, or tale of witch, or ghost, 790
So dreadful that the housewife's listening wheel
Suspends its hum, their toil protracted lasts :
Even when the royal birth, by wondrous grace,
Gives one half day to mirth, that shred of time
Must not be lost, but thriftily ekes out
To-morrow's and to-morrow's lengthen'd task.
No joys, no sports have they : what little time,
The fragment of an hour, can be retrench'd
From labour, is devoted to a shew,
A boasted boon, of what the public gives— 800
Instruction. Viewing all around the bliss
Of liberty, they feel its loss the more ;
Freely through boundless air, they wistful see
The wild bird's pinion past their prison flit ;
Free in the air the merry lark they see
On high ascend ; free on the swinging spray
The woodland bird is perch'd, and leaves at will
Its perch ; the open quivering bill they see,
But no sweet note by them is heard, all lost,
Extinguish'd in the noise that ceaseless stuns the ear.
Here vice collected festers, and corrupts. 811
The female virtues fade ; and, in their stead,
Springs up a produce rank of noxious weeds.

And if such be the effects of that sad system, 814
 Which, in the face of nature's law, would wring
 Gain from the labouring hands of playful children ;
 If such the effects, where worth and sense direct
 The living, intellectual machines,
 What must not follow, when the power is lodged
 With senseless, sordid, heartless avarice ? 820

Where, Fancy, hast thou led me ? No, stern Truth,
 'Tis thou hast led me from the pleasant sight
 Of blossom'd furze, and bank of fragrant birch.
 And now once more I turn me to the woods,
 With willing step, and list, closing my eyes,
 The lulling soothing sounds, that pour a balm
 Into the rankled soul ; the brooklet's murmur,
 That louder to the ear, long listening, grows,
 And louder still, like noise of many waters,
 Yet not so loud but that the wild bee's buzz 830
 Slung past the ear, and grasshopper's shrill chirp,
 Are heard ; for now the sultry hours unfurl
 Each insect wing : the aimless butterflies,
 In airy dance, cross and recross the mead ;
 The dragon-fly, in horizontal course,
 Spins over-head, and fast eludes the sight.

At such a still and sultry hour as this,
 When not a strain is heard through all the woods,
 I've seen the shilfa¹ light from off his perch,
 And hop into a shallow of the stream, 840
 Then, half afraid, flit to the shore, then in
 Again alight, and dip his rosy breast
 And fluttering wings, while dewlike globules coursed
 The plumage of his brown empurpled back.
 The barefoot boy, who, on some slaty stone,
 Almost too hot for touch, has watching stood,

¹ ' Shilfa : ' Chaffinch.

Now thinks the well-drench'd prize his own, 847
And rushes forward ; quick, though wet, the wing
Gains the first branches of some neighbouring tree,
And balks the upward gazing hopeless eye.
The ruffling plumes are shook, the pens are trimm'd,
And full and clear the sprightly ditty rings,
Cheering the brooding dam : she sits conceal'd
Within the nest deep-hollow'd, well disguised
With lichens gray, and mosses gradual blent,
As if it were a knurl in the bough.

With equal art externally disguised,
But of internal structure passing far
The feather'd concaves of the other tribes,
The goldfinch weaves, with willow-down inlaid, 860
And cannach tufts, his wonderful abode.
Sometimes, suspended at the limber end
Of plane-tree spray, among the broad-leaved shoots,
The tiny hammock swings to every gale ;
Sometimes in closest thickets 'tis conceal'd ;
Sometimes in hedge luxuriant, where the brier,
The bramble, and the plum-tree branch,
Warp through the thorn, surmounted by the flowers
Of climbing vetch and honeysuckle wild,
All undefaced by art's deforming hand. 870
But mark the pretty bird himself ! how light,
And quick, his every motion, every note !
How beautiful his plumes, his red-ring'd head,
His breast of brown ! and see him stretch his wing—
A fairy fan of golden spokes it seems.
Oft on the thistle's tuft he, nibbling, sits,
Light as the down ; then, 'mid a flight of downs,
He wings his way, piping his shrillest call.
Proud Thistle ! emblem dear to Scotland's sons !
Begirt with threat'ning points, strong in defence, 880

Unwilling to assault ! By thee the arm 881
 Of England was repell'd ; the rash attempt
 Oft did the wounded arm of England rue.
 But fraud prevail'd, where force had tried in vain :
 Fraud undermined thy root, and laid thy head,
 Thy crested head, low sullied in the dust.
 Belhaven,¹ Fletcher,² venerated shades !
 Long shall your glorious names, your words of fire,
 Spite of beledger'd Trade's corrupting creed,
 That estimates a country by its gold, 890
 And balances surrender'd freedom's self—
 The life-blood of a people !—with a show
 Of columns crowded full of pounds and pence ;
 Long shall your names illumine the historic page,
 Inspire the poet's lay, kindle the glow
 Of noble daring in the patriot's breast !

Deep-toned (a contrast to the goldfinch note)
 The cushat plains ; nor is her changeless plaint
 Unmusical, when with the general choir
 Of woodland harmony it softly blends. 900

Her sprig-form'd nest, upon some hawthorn branch,
 Is laid so thinly, that the light of day
 Is through it seen : so rudely is it form'd,
 That oft the simple boy, who counts the hours
 By blowing off the dandelion downs,
 Mistakes the witch-knots for the cushat's nest.
 Sweet constant bird ! the lover's favourite theme !
 Protected by the love-inspiring lay,
 Seldom thou mov'st thy home ; year after year,
 The self-same tree beholds thy youngling pair 910
 Matured to flight. There is a hawthorn tree
 With which the ivy arms have wrestled long ;

¹ ' Belhaven : ' Lord Belhaven, who delivered a noble speech in Scotland's last Parliament.—² Fletcher of Saltoun.

'Tis old, yet vigorous : beneath its shade 913
 A beauteous herb, so rare that all the woods,
 For far and near around, cannot produce
 Its like, shoots upright ; from the stalk
 Four pointed leaves,¹ luxuriant, smooth, diverge,
 Crown'd with a berry of deep purple hue.
 Upon this aged thorn, a lovely pair
 Of cushats wont to build : no schoolboy's hand 920
 Would rob their simple nest ; the constant coo,
 That floated down the dell, soften'd his heart.
 But, ah ! the pirate of the rock, the hawk,
 Hovering, discern'd the prize : soft blew the gale
 Of May, and full the greenwood chorus rose,
 All but the sweet dove's note : in vain the ear
 Turn'd listening ; strewn upon the ground,
 The varying plumes, with drooping violets mix'd,
 Disclosed the death the beauteous bird had died.

Where are your haunts, ye helpless birds of song, 930
 When winter's cloudy wing begins to shade
 The emptied fields, when ripening sloes assume
 Their deepest jet, and wild plums purple hang
 Tempting, yet harsh till mellow'd by the frost ?
 Ah, now ye sit crowding upon the thorns,
 Beside your former homes, all desolate,
 And fill'd with wither'd leaves ; while fieldfare flocks
 From distant lands alight, and, chirping, fly
 From hedge to hedge, fearful of man's approach.

Of all the tuneful tribes, the redbreast sole 940
 Confides himself to man ; others sometimes
 Are driven within our lintel-posts by storms,
 And, fearfully, the sprinkled crumbs partake :
 He feels himself at home. When lowers the year,
 He perches on the village turf copse,

¹ • Four pointed leaves : ' the herb *Paris*.

And, with his sweet but interrupted trills, 946
Bespeaks the pity of his future host.

But long he braves the season, ere he change
The heaven's grand canopy for man's low home ;
Oft is he seen, when fleecy showers bespread
The house-tops white, on the thaw'd smiddy roof,
Or in its open window he alights,
And, fearless of the clang, and furnace glare,
Looks round, arresting the uplifted arm,
While on the anvil cools the glowing bar.
But when the season roughens, and the drift
Flies upward, mingling with the falling flakes
In whirl confused, then on the cottage floor
He lights, and hops, and flits, from place to place,
Restless at first, till, by degrees, he feels 960

He is in safety : fearless then he sings
The winter day ; and when the long dark night
Has drawn the rustic circle round the fire,
Waked by the dinsome wheel, he trims his plumes,
And, on the distaff perched, chants soothingly
His summer song ; or, fearlessly lights down
Upon the basking sheep-dog's glossy fur ;
Till, chance, the herd-boy, at his supper mess,
Attract his eye, then on the milky rim
Brisk he alights, and picks his little share. 970

Besides the redbreast's note, one other strain,
One summer strain, on wintry days is heard.

Amid the leafless thorn the merry wren,
When icicles hang dripping from the rock,
Pipes her perennial lay ; even when the flakes,
Broad as her pinions, fall, she lightly flies
Athwart the shower, and sings upon the wing.

While thus the smallest of the plummy tribes
Defies the storm, others there are that fly.

Long ere the winter lowers, to genial skies ;
 Nor this cold clime revisit, till the blooms
 Of parting spring blow 'mid the summer buds.

980

PART SECOND.

How sweet the first sound of the cuckoo's note !
 Whence is the magic pleasure of the sound ?
 How do we long recall the very tree,
 Or bush, near which we stood, when on the ear
 The unexpected note, *cuckoo* ! again,
 And yet again, came down the budding vale ?
 It is the voice of spring among the trees ;
 It tells of lengthening days, of coming blooms ;
 It is the symphony of many a song.

But, there, the stranger flies close to the ground,
 With hawklike pinion, of a leaden blue.

10

Poor wanderer ! from hedge to hedge she flies,
 And trusts her offspring to another's care :
 The sooty-plumed hedge-sparrow frequent acts
 The foster-mother, warming into life
 The youngling, destined to supplant her own.
 Meanwhile, the cuckoo sings her idle song,
 Monotonous, yet sweet, now here, now there,
 Herself but rarely seen ; nor does she cease
 Her changeless note, until the broom, full blown,
 Give warning that her time for flight is come.
 Thus, ever journeying on, from land to land,
 She, sole of all the innumerable feather'd tribes,
 Passes a stranger's life, without a home.

20

Home ! word delightful to the heart of man,
 And bird, and beast !—small word, yet not the less
 Significant—comprising all !
 Whatever to affection is most dear,
 Is all included in that little word—

Wife, children, father, mother, brother, friend. 30
At mention of that word, the seaman, clinging
Upon the dipping yard-arm, sees afar
The twinkling fire, round which his children cower,
And speak of him, counting the months, and weeks,
That must pass dreary o'er, ere he return.
He sighs to view the seabird's rapid wing.

Oh, had I but the envied power to choose
My home, no sound of city bell should reach
My ear ; not even the cannon's thundering roar.
Far in a vale, be there my low abode, 40
Embower'd in woods where many a songster chants.
And let me now indulge the airy dream !
A bow-shot off in front a river flows,
That, during summer drought, shallow and clear,
Chides with its pebbly bed, and, murmuring,
Invites forgetfulness ; half-hid it flows,
Now between rocks, now through a bush-girt glade,
Now sleeping in a pool, that laves the roots
Of overhanging trees, whose drooping boughs
Dip midway over in the darken'd stream ; 50
While ever and anon, upon the breeze,
The dash of distant waterfall is borne.
A range of hills, with craggy summits crown'd,
And furrow'd deep with many a bosky cleugh,
Wards off the northern blast : there skims the hawk
Forth from her cliff, cying the furzy slope
That joins the mountain to the smiling vale.
Through all the woods the holly evergreen,
And laurel's softer leaf, and ivied thorn,
Lend winter-shelter to the shivering wing. 60
No gravell'd paths, pared from the smooth-shaved turf,
Wind through these woods ; the simple unmade road,
Mark'd with the frequent hoof of sheep or kine,

Or rustic's studded shoe, I love to tread. 64
No threatening board forewarns the homeward hind
Of man-traps, or of law's more dreaded gripe.
Pleasant to see the labourer homeward hie
Light-hearted, as he thinks his hastening steps
Will soon be welcomed by his children's smile!
Pleasant to see the milkmaid's blithesome look, 70
As to the trysting-thorn she gaily trips,
With steps that scarcely feel the elastic ground!
Nor be the lowly dwellings of the poor
Thrust to a distance, as unseemly sights.
Curse on the heartless taste that, proud, exclaims,
'Erase the hamlet, sweep the cottage off;
Remove each stone, and only leave behind
The trees that once embower'd the wretched huts.
What though the inmates old, who hoped to end
Their days below these trees, must seek a home 80
Far from their native fields, far from the graves
In which their fathers lie, to city lanes,
Darksome and close, exiled? It must be so;
The wide extending lawn would else be marr'd
By objects so incongruous.' Barbarous taste!
Stupidity intense! Yon straw-roof'd cot,
Seen through the elms, it is a lovely sight!
That scatter'd hamlet, with its burn-side green,
On which the thrifty housewife spreads her yarn,
Or half-bleach'd web, while children busy play, 90
And paddle in the stream, for every heart,
Untainted by pedantic rules, hath charms.

I love the neighbourhood of man and beast:
I would not place my stable out of sight;
No! close behind my dwelling, it should form
A fence, on one side, to my garden plat.
What beauty equals shelter, in a clime

Where wintry blasts with summer breezes blend, 98
Chilling the day ? How pleasant 'tis to hear
December's winds, amid surrounding trees,
Raging aloud ! how grateful 'tis to wake,
While raves the midnight storm, and hear the sound
Of busy grinders at the well-fill'd rack ;
Or flapping wing, and crow of chanticleer,
Long ere the lingering morn ; or bouncing flails,
That tell the dawn is near ! Pleasant the path
By sunny garden-wall, when all the fields
Are chill and comfortless ; or barn-yard snug,
Where flocking birds, of various plume, and chirp
Discordant, cluster on the leaning stack, 110
From whence the thresher 'draws the rustling sheaves.

Oh, Nature ! all thy seasons please the eye
Of him who sees a Deity in all.
It is His presence that diffuses charms
Unspeakable, o'er mountain, wood, and stream.
To think that He, who hears the heavenly choirs,
Hearkens complacent to the woodland song ;
To think that He, who rolls yon solar sphere,
Uplifts the warbling songster to the sky ;
To mark His presence in the mighty bow, 120
That spans the clouds, as in the tints minute
Of tiniest flower ; to hear His awful voice
In thunder speak, and whisper in the gale ;
To know and feel His care for all that lives—
'Tis this that makes the barren waste appear
A fruitful field, each grove a paradise.
Yes ! place me 'mid far stretching woodless wilds,
Where no sweet song is heard ; the heath-bell there
Would soothe my weary sight, and tell of Thee !
There would my gratefully-uplifted eye 130
Survey the heavenly vault, by day, by night,

When glows the firmament from pole to pole ; 132
There would my overflowing heart exclaim,
'The heavens declare the glory of the Lord,
The firmament shews forth his handiwork !'

Less loud, but not less clear, His humbler works
Proclaim His power ; the swallow knows her time,
And, on the vernal breezes, wings her way,
O'er mountain, plain, and far-extending seas,
From Afric's torrid sands to Britain's shore. 140

Before the cuckoo's note, she, twittering, gay,
Skims 'long the brook, or o'er the brushwood tops,
When dance the midgy clouds in warping maze
Confused : 'tis thus, by her, the air is swept
Of insect myriads, that would else infest
The greenwood walk, blighting each rural joy :
For this, if pity plead in vain, oh, spare
Her clay-built home ! Her all, her young, she trusts,
Trusts to the power of man : fearful, herself
She never trusts ; free, on the summer morn, 150
She, at his window, hails the rising sun.
Twice seven days she broods ; then on the wing,
From morn to dewy eve, unceasing plies,
Save when she feeds or cherishes her young ;
And oft she's seen, beneath her little porch,
Clinging supine, to deal the air-glean'd food.

From her the husbandman the coming shower
Foretells : along the mead closely she skiffs,
Or o'er the streamlet pool she skims, so near,
That, from her dipping wing, the wavy circlets 160
Spread to the shore ; then fall the single drops,
Prelusive of the shower.

The martins, too,
The dwellers in the ruin'd castle wall,
When lowers the sky a flight less lofty wheel.

Presageful of the thunder peal, when deep 165
A boding silence broods o'er all the vale,
From airy altitudes they stoop, and fly
Swiftly, with shrillest scream, round and around
The rugged battlements ; or fleetly dart
Through loopholes, whence the shaft was wont to
glance ; 170

Or thrid the window of the lofty bower,
Where hapless royalty, with care-closed eyes,
Woo'd sleep in vain, foreboding what befell—
The loss of friends, of country, freedom, life !
Long ere the wintry gusts, with chilly sweep,
Sigh through the leafless groves, the swallow tribes,
Heaven-warn'd, in airy bevvies congregate,
Or clustering sit, as if in deep consult
What time to launch ; but, lingering, they wait,
Until the feeble of the latest broods 180

Have gather'd strength the sea-ward path to brave.
At last the farewell twitter spreading sounds,
Aloft they fly, and melt in distant air.
Far o'er the British sea, in western course,
O'er the Biscayan mountain-waves they glide :
Then o'er Iberian plains, through fields of air,
Perfumed by orchard groves, where lowly bends
The orange bough beneath its juicy load,
And over Calpe's iron-fenced rock, their course,
To Mauritania's sunny plains, they urge. 190

There are who doubt this migratory voyage.
But wherefore, from the distance of the flight,
Should wonder verge on disbelief, the bulk
So small, so large and strong the buoyant wing ?

Behold the corn-craik ; she, too, wings her way
To other lands : ne'er is she found immersed
In lakes, or buried torpid in the sand,

Though weak her wing contrasted with her bulk. 198
Seldom she rises from the grassy field,
And never till compell'd ; and, when upraised,
With feet suspended, awkwardly she flies ;
Her flight a ridgebreadth : suddenly she drops,
And, running, still eludes the following foot.

Poor bird, though harsh thy note, I love it well !
It tells of summer eves, mild and serene,
When through the grass, waist-deep, I wont to wade
In fruitless chase of thee ; now here, now there,
Thy desultory call. Oft does thy call
The midnight silence break ; oft, ere the dawn,
It wakes the slumbering lark ; he upward wings 210
His misty way, and, viewless, sings and soars.

PART THIRD.

FAREWELL the greenwood, and the welkin song !
Farewell the harmless bill !—The o'erfolding beak,
Incurvated ; the clutching pounce ; the eye,
Ferocious, keen, full-orb'd ; the attitude
Erect ; the skimming flight ; the hovering poise ;
The rapid sousing stroke ;—these now I sing !

How fleet the falcon's pinion in pursuit !
Less fleet the linnet's flight ! Alas, poor bird !
Weary and weak is now thy flagging wing,
While close and closer draws the eager foe. 10
Now up she rises, and, with arrow'd pinions,
Impetuous souses ; but in vain : with turn
Sudden, the linnet shuns the deadly stroke,
Throwing her far behind ; but quick again
She presses on : down drops the feeble victim
Into the hawthorn bush, and panting sits.
The falcon, skimming round and round, espies
Her prey, and darts among the prickly twigs.

Unequal now the chase ! struggling she strives, 19
Entangled in the thorny labyrinth,
While easily its way the small bird winds,
Regaining soon the centre of the grove.

But not alone the dwellers of the wood
Tremble beneath the falcon's fateful wing.
Oft hovering o'er the barn-yard is she seen,
In early spring, when round their ruffling dam
The feeble younglings pick the pattering hail :
And oft she plunges low, and swiftly skims
The ground ; as oft the bold and threatening mien
Of chanticleer deters her from the prey. 30

Amid the mountain fells, or river cliffs
Abrupt, the falcon's eyrie, perch'd on high,
Defies access : broad to the sun 'tis spread,
With wither'd sprigs hung o'er the dizzy brink.
What dreadful cliffs o'erhang this little stream !
So loftily they tower, that he who looks
Upward, to view their almost meeting summits,
Feels sudden giddiness, and instant grasps
The nearest fragment of the channel rocks,
Resting his aching eye on some green branch 40
That midway down shoots from the creviced crag.
Athwart the narrow chasm fleet flies the rack,
Each cloud no sooner visible than gone ;
While 'tween these natural bulwarks, that deride
The art of man, murmurs the hermit brook,
And joins, with open'd banks, the full-stream'd Clyde.

How various are thy aspects, noble stream !
Now gliding silently by sloping banks,
Now flowing softly, with a silver sound,
Now rushing, tumbling, boiling through the rocks. 50
Even on that bulging verge smooth flows thy stream,
Then spreads along a gentle ledge, then sweeps

Compress'd by an abutting turn, till o'er
It pours tremendously ; again it sweeps
Unpausing, till, again, with louder roar,
It mines into the boisterous wheeling gulf ;
While high the boulded foam, at times, displays
An Iris arch, thrown light from rock to rock ;
And oft the swallow through the misty cloud
Flits fearlessly, and drinks upon the wing.

5.
3

60

Oh, what an amphitheatre surrounds
The abyss, in which the downward mass is plunged,
Stunning the ear ! High as the falcon's flight,
The rocks precipitous ascend, and bound
The scene magnificent ; deep, deep below,
The snowy surge spreads to a dark expanse.

These are the very rocks on which the eye
Of Wallace gazed, the music this he loved.
Oft has he stood upon the trembling brink,
Unstay'd by tree or twig, absorbed in thought ;
There would he trace, with eager eye, the oak,
Uprooted from its bank by ice-fraught floods,
And floating o'er the dreadful cataract :
There would he moralise upon its fate ;—
It re-appears with scarce a broken bough,
It re-appears—Scotland may yet be free !

70

High rides the moon amid the fleecy clouds,
That glisten, as they float athwart her disk ;
Sweet is the glimpse that, for a moment, plays
Among these mouldering pinnacles : but, hark !
That dismal cry ! It is the wailing owl.
Night-long she mourns, perch'd in some vacant niche,
Or time-rent crevice : sometimes to the woods
She bends her silent, slowly moving wing,
And on some leafless tree, dead of old age,
Sits watching for her prey ; but should the foot

80

Of man intrude into her solemn shades,
Startled, he hears the fragile, breaking branch,
Crash as she rises : further in the gloom,
To deeper solitudes she wings her way.

87

Oft in the hurly of the wintry storm,
Housed in some rocking steeple, she augments
The horror of the night ; or when the winds
Exhausted pause, she listens to the sound
Of the slow-swinging pendulum, till loud
Again the blast is up, and lightning gleams
Shoot 'thwart, and rings a faint and deadly toll.

On ancient oak, or elm, whose topmost boughs
Begin to fail, the raven's twig-form'd house
Is built ; and, many a year, the self-same tree
The aged solitary pair frequent.

100

But distant is their range ; for oft at morn
They take their flight, and not till twilight gray
Their slow returning cry hoarse meets the ear.

Well does the raven love the sound of war !
Amid those plains where Danube darkly rolls,
The theatres on which the kingly play
Of war is oftenest acted, there the peal
Of cannon-mouths summons the sable flocks
To wait their death-doom'd prey ; and they do wait : 110
Yes, when the glittering columns, front to front
Drawn out, approach in deep and awful silence,
The raven's voice is heard hovering between.
Sometimes upon the far-deserted tents,
She boding sits, and sings her fateful song.
But in the abandon'd field she most delights,
When o'er the dead and dying slants the beam
Of peaceful morn, and wreaths of reeking mist
Rise from the gore-dew'd sward : from corpse to corpse
She revels, far and wide ; then, sated, flies 120

To some shot-shiver'd branch, whereon she cleans 121
Her purpled beak ; and down she lights again,
To end her horrid meal : another, keen,
Plunges her beak deep in yon horse's side,
Till, by the hungry hound displaced, she flits
Once more to human prey.

Ah, who is he

At whose heart-welling wound she drinks,
Glutting her thirst ! He was a lovely youth ;
Fair Scotia was his home, until his sire
To swoll'n Monopoly resign'd, heart-wrung, 130
The small demesne which his forefathers plough'd :
Wide then dispersed the family of love.
One son betook him to the all-friendly main :
Another, with his aged parents, plied
The sickly trade, in city garret pent ;
Their youngest born, the drum and martial show,
Deluded half, and half-despairing, join'd ;
And soon he lay the food of bird and beast.
Long is his fate unknown ; the horrid sum
Of dead is named, but sad suspense is left, 140
Enlabyrinth'd in doubt, to please itself
With dark, misgiving hope. Ah, one there is
Who fosters long the dying hope that still
He may return : the live-long summer-day
She at the house end sits ; and oft her wheel
Is stopp'd, while on the road, far-stretch'd, she bends
A melancholy, eye-o'erflowing look ;
Or strives to mould the distant traveller
Into the form of him who's far away.
Hopeless, and broken-hearted, still she loves 150
To sing, ' When wild war's deadly blast was blawn.'

Alas ! war riots with increasing rage.
Behold that field bestrewn with bleaching bones ;

And, mark ! the raven in the horse's ribs, 154
Gathering, encaged, the gleanings of a harvest
Almost forgotten now. Rejoice, ye birds of prey !
No longer shall ye glean your scanty meals ;
Upon that field again long prostrate wreaths,
Death-mown, shall lie : I see the gory mound
Of dead and wounded, piled, with here and there 160
A living hand, clutching in vain for help.

But what the horrors of the field of war
To those, the sequel of the foil'd attempt
Of fetter'd vengeance struggling to be free !
Inhuman sons of Europe ! not content
With dooms of death, your victim high ye hung
Encaged, to scorch beneath the torrid ray,
And feed, alive, the hungry fowls of heaven.
Around the bars already, see, they cling !
The vulture's head looks through ; she strives in vain 170
To force her way : the lesser birds await
Till worn-out nature sinks ; then on they pounce,
And tear the quivering flesh : in agony
The victim wakes, and rolls his wretched eyes,
And feebly drives the ravening flocks away.
Most dreadfully he groans : 'tis thirst, thirst, thirst,
Direst of human torments !—down again
He sinks—again he feels the torturing beak.

England ! such things have been, and still would be,
But that the glorious band, the steadfast friends 180
Of Afric's sons, stand ready to avenge
Their wrongs, and crush the tyrants low.

On distant waves, the raven of the sea,
The cormorant, devours her carrion food.
Along the blood-stain'd coast of Senegal,
Prowling, she scents the cassia-perfumed breeze
Tainted with death, and, keener, forward flies :

The towering sails, that waft the house of woe, 188
 Afar she views : upon the heavy hulk,
 Deep-logg'd with wretchedness, full fast she gains :
 (Revoltng sight ! the flag of freedom waves
 Above the stern-emblazon'd words,¹ that tell
 The amount of crimes which Britain's boasted laws,
 Within the narrow wooden walls, permit !)
 And now she nighs the carnage-freighted keel,
 Unscared by rattling fetters, or the shriek
 Of mothers, o'er their ocean-buried babes.
 Lured by the scent, unweariedly she flies,
 And at the foamy dimples of the track
 Darts sportively, or perches on a corpse. 200

From scenes like these, oh, Scotland ! once again
 To thee my weary fancy fondly hies,
 And, with the eagle, mountain-perch'd, alights.
 Amid Lochaber's wilds, or dark Glencoe,
 High up the pillar'd mountain's steepest side,
 The eagle, from her eyrie on the crag
 Of over-jutting rock, beholds afar.
 Viewing the distant flocks, with ranging eye
 She meditates the prey ; but waits the time
 When seas of mist extend along the vale, 210
 And, rising gradual, reach her lofty shore :
 Up then to sunny regions of the air
 She soars, and looks upon the white-wreath'd summits
 Of mountains, seeming ocean isles, then down
 She plunges, stretching through the hazy deep ;
 Unseen she flies, and, on her playful quarry,
 Pounces unseen : the shepherd knows his loss,
 When high o'er-head he hears a passing bleat
 Faint, and more faintly, dying far away.

¹ 'Stern-emblazon'd words:' Slave ships used to carry on their sterns a list of the number of slaves they were licensed to carry.

And now aloft she bends her homeward course, 220
 Loaded, yet light ; and soon her youngling pair
 Joyful descry her buoyant wing emerge
 And float along the cloud ; fluttering they stoop
 Upon the dizzy brink, as if they aim'd
 To try the abyss, and meet her coming breast ;
 But soon her coming breast, and outstretch'd wings,
 Glide shadowing down, and close upon their heads.

It was upon the eagle's plunder'd store
 That Wallace fared, when hunted from his home,
 A glorious outlaw ! by the lawless power 230
 Of freedom's foil'd assassin, England's king.
 Along the mountain cliffs, that ne'er were clomb
 By other footstep than his own, 'twas there
 His eagle-vision'd genius, towering, plann'd
 The grand emprise of setting Scotland free.
 He long'd to mingle in the storm of war ;
 And as the eagle dauntlessly ascends,
 Revelling amid the elemental strife,
 His mind sublimed prefigured to itself
 Each circumstance of future hard-fought fields— 240
 The battle's hubbub loud ; the forceful press,
 That from his victim hurries him afar ;
 The impetuous close concentrated assault,
 That, like a billow broken on the rocks,
 Recedes, but forward heaves with doubled fury.

When lowers the rack unmoving, high up-piled,
 And silence deep foretells the thunder near,
 The eagle upward penetrates the gloom,
 And, far above the fire-impregnate wreaths,
 Soaring surveys the othercal volcanos ; 250
 Till, muttering low at first, begins the peal ;
 Then she descends ; she loves the thunder's voice,
 She wheels, and sports amid the rattling clouds,

Undazzled gazes on the sheeted blaze, 274
Darts at the flash, or, hung in hovering poise,
Delighted hears the music of the roar.
Nor does the wintry blast, the drifting fall,
Shrouded in night, and, with a death-hand grasp,
Benumbing life, drive her to seek the roof
Of cave, or hollow cliff; firm on her perch, 280
Her ancient and accustomed rock, she sits,
With wing-couch'd head, and, to the morning light,
Appears a frost-rent fragment, coped with snow.

Yet her, invulnerable as she seems
By every change of elemental power,
The art of man, the general foe of man
And bird and beast, subdues; the leaden bolt,
Slung from the mimic lightning's nitrous wing,
Brings low her head; her close and mailed plumage
Avails her nought, for higher than her perch 270
The clambering marksman lies, and takes his aim
Instant upon her flight, when every plume
Ruffling expands to catch the lifting gale.
She has the death; upward a little space
She springs, then plumb-down drops: the victor stands,
Long listening, ere he hear the fall; at last,
The crashing branches of the unseen wood,
Far down below, send echoing up the sound,
That faintly rises to his leaning ear.
But, woe to him! if, with the mortal wound, 280
She still retain strength to revenge the wrong:
Her bleeding wing she veers; her madden'd eye
Discerns the lurking wretch; on him she springs;
One talon clutch'd, with life's last struggling throes
Convulsed, is buried at his heart; the other
Deep in his tortured eyeballs is transfixed:
Pleased she expires upon his writhing breast.

Of bulk more huge, and borne on broader vans, 288
 The eagle of the sea from Atlas soars,
 Or Teneriffe's hoar peak, and stretches far
 Above the Atlantic wave, contemning distance.
 The watchful helmsman from the stern describes,
 And hails her course, and many an eye is raised.
 Loftier she flies than hundred times mast-height :
 Onward she floats, then plunges from her soar
 Down to the ship, as if she aim'd to perch
 Upon the mainmast pinnacle ; but up again
 She mounts Alp high, and, with her lower'd head
 Suspended, eyes the bulging sails, disdains
 Their tardy course, outflies the hurrying rack, 300
 And, disappearing, mingles with the clouds.

BIBLICAL PICTURES.

THE FIRST SABBATH.

Six days the heavenly host, in circle vast,
 Like that untouching cincture which enzones
 The globe of Saturn, compass'd wide this orb,
 And with the forming mass floated along,
 In rapid course, through yet untravell'd space,
 Beholding God's stupendous power,—a world
 Bursting from Chaos at the omnific will,
 And perfect ere the sixth day's evening star
 On Paradise arose. Blessed that eve !
 The Sabbath's harbinger, when, all complete, 10
 In freshest beauty from Jehovah's hand,
 Creation bloom'd ; when Eden's twilight face
 Smiled, like a sleeping babe : the voice divine
 A holy calm breathed o'er the goodly work :
 Mildly the sun, upon the loftiest trees,

Shed mellowly a sloping beam. Peace reign'd, 16
And love, and gratitude : the human pair
Their orisons pour'd forth : love, concord, reign'd ;
The falcon, perch'd upon the blooming bough
With Philomela, listen'd to her lay ;
Among the antler'd herd the tiger couch'd,
Harmless ; the lion's mane no terror spread
Among the careless ruminating flock.
Silence was o'er the deep ; the noiseless surge,
The last subsiding wave, of that dread tumult
Which raged, when Ocean, at the mute command,
Rush'd furiously into his new-cleft bed,
Was gently rippling on the pebbled shore ;
While, on the swell, the sea-bird, with her head
Wing-veil'd, slept tranquilly. The host of heaven, 30
Entranced in new delight, speechless adored ;
Nor stopp'd their fleet career, nor changed their form
Encircular, till on that hemisphere,
In which the blissful garden sweet exhaled
Its incense, odorous clouds, the Sabbath dawn
Arose ; then wide the flying circle oped,
And soar'd, in semblance of a mighty rainbow :
Silent ascend the choirs of Seraphim ;
No harp resounds, mute is each voice ; the burst
Of joy and praise reluctant they repress, 40
For love and concord all things so attuned
To harmony, that Earth must have received
The grand vibration, and to the centre shook :
But soon as to the starry altitudes
They reach'd, then what a storm of sound, tremendous,
Swell'd through the realms of space ! The morning stars
Together sang, and all the sons of God
Shouted for joy ! Loud was the peal ; so loud
As would have quite o'erwhelm'd the human sense :

But to the Earth it came a gentle strain, 50
 Like softest fall breathed from Æolian lute,
 When 'mid the chords the evening gale expires.
 Day of the Lord ! creation's hallow'd close !
 Day of the Lord ! (prophetical they sang,)
 Benignant mitigation of that doom
 Which must, ere long, consign the fallen race,
 Dwellers in yonder star, to toil and woe !

THE FINDING OF MOSES.

Slow glides the Nile : amid the margin flags,
 Closed in a bulrush ark, the babe is left,
 Left by a mother's hand. His sister waits
 Far off ; and pale, 'tween hope and fear, beholds
 The royal maid, surrounded by her train,
 Approach the river bank, approach the spot
 Where sleeps the innocent ; she sees them stoop
 With meeting plumes ; the rushy lid is oped,
 And wakes the infant, smiling in his tears,
 As when along a little mountain lake, 10
 The summer south-wind breathes with gentle sigh,
 And parts the reeds, unveiling, as they bend,
 A water-lily floating on the wave.

JEPHTHA'S VOW.

From conquest Jephtha came, with faltering step
 And troubled eye : his home appears in view ;
 He trembles at the sight. Sad he forebodes,
 His vow will meet a victim in his child :
 For well he knows, that, from her earliest years,
 She still was first to meet his homeward steps :
 Well he remembers how, with tottering gait,
 She ran, and clasp'd his knees, and lisp'd, and look'd
 Her joy ; and how, when garlanding with flowers

His helm, fearful, her infant hand would shrink 10
 Back from the lion couch'd beneath the crest.
 What sound is that, which, from the palm-tree grove,
 Floats now with choral swell, now fainter falls
 Upon the ear? It is, it is the song
 He loved to hear, a song of thanks and praise,
 Sung by the patriarch for his ransomed son.
 Hope from the omen springs : oh, blessed hope !
 It may not be her voice ! Fain would he think
 'Twas not his daughter's voice, that still approached,
 Blent with the timbrel's note. Forth from the grove 20
 She foremost glides of all the minstrel band :
 Moveless he stands ; then grasps his hilt, still red
 With hostile gore, but, shuddering, quits the hold ;
 And clasps, in agony, his hands, and cries,
 ' Alas, my daughter ! thou hast brought me low.'—
 The timbrel at her rooted feet resounds.

SAUL AND DAVID.

DEEP was the furrow in the royal brow,
 When David's hand, lightly as vernal gales
 Rippling the brook of Kedron, skimm'd the lyre :
 He sung of Jacob's youngest born, the child
 Of his old age, sold to the Ishmaelite ;
 His exaltation to the second power
 In Pharaoh's realm ; his brethren thither sent ;
 Suppliant they stood before his face, well known,
 Unknowing, till Joseph fell upon the neck
 Of Benjamin, his mother's son, and wept. 10
 Unconsciously the warlike shepherd paused :
 But when he saw, down the yet-quivering string,
 The tear-drop trembling glide, abashed, he check'd.
 Indignant at himself, the bursting flood,
 And, with a sweep impetuous, struck the chords :

From side to side his hands transversely glance, 16
 Like lightning thwart a stormy sea ; his voice
 Arises 'mid the clang, and straightway calms
 The harmonious tempest to a solemn swell,
 Majestical, triumphant ; for he sings
 Of Arad's mighty host by Israel's arm
 Subdued ; of Israel through the desert led
 He sings ; of him who was their leader, call'd
 By God himself from keeping Jethro's flock,
 To be a ruler o'er the chosen race.
 Kindles the eye of Saul ; his arm is poised ;
 Harmless the javelin quivers in the wall.

ELIJAH FED BY RAVENS.

SORE was the famine throughout all the bounds
 Of Israel, when Elijah, by command
 Of God, journey'd to Cherith's failing brook.
 No rain-drop falls ; no dew-fraught cloud, at morn
 Or closing eve, creeps slowly up the vale ;
 The withering herbage dies ; among the palms,
 The shrivell'd leaves send to the summer gale
 An autumn rustle ; no sweet songster's lay
 Is warbled from the branches ; scarce is heard
 The rill's faint brawl. The prophet looks around, 10
 And trusts in God, and lays his silver'd head
 Upon the flowerless bank ; serene he sleeps,
 Nor wakes till dawning : then, with hands enclasp'd,
 And heavenward face, and eyelids closed, he prays
 To Him who manna on the desert shower'd,
 To Him who from the rock made fountains gush :
 Entranced the man of God remains ; till, roused
 By sound of wheeling wings, with grateful heart,
 He sees the ravens fearless by his side
 Alight, and leave the heaven-provided food. 20

THE BIRTH OF JESUS ANNOUNCED.

DEEP was the midnight silence in the fields
Of Bethlehem ; hush'd the folds ; save that, at times,
Was heard the lamb's faint bleat : the shepherds, stretch'd
On the greensward, survey'd the starry vault :
' The heavens declare the glory of the Lord,
The firmament shews forth thy handiwork ;'
Thus they, their hearts attuned to the Most High ;
When, suddenly, a splendid cloud appear'd,
As if a portion of the milky way
Descended slowly in a spiral course. 10
Near and more near it draws ; then, hovering, floats,
High as the soar of eagle, shedding bright,
Upon the folded flocks, a heavenly radiance,
From whence was utter'd loud, yet sweet, a voice,—
' Fear not, I bring good tidings of great joy ;
For unto you is born this day a Saviour !
And this shall be a sign to you,—the babe,
Laid lowly in a manger, ye shall find.'
The angel spake ; when, lo ! upon the cloud,
A multitude of Seraphim, enthroned, 20
Sang praises, saying, ' Glory to the Lord
On high, on earth be peace, good will to men.'
With sweet response harmoniously they choir'd,
And while, with heavenly harmony, the song
Arose to God, more bright the buoyant throne
Illumed the land : the prowling lion stops,
Awe-struck, with mane uprear'd, and flatten'd head ;
And, without turning, backward on his steps
Recoils, aghast, into the desert gloom.
A trembling joy the astonish'd shepherds prove, 30
As heavenward re-ascends the vocal blaze
Triumphantly ; while, by degrees, the strain

Dies on the ear, that self-deluded listens,
As if a sound so sweet could never die. 33

BEHOLD MY MOTHER, AND MY BRETHREN !

‘WHO is my mother, or my brethren ?’—
He spake, and looked on them who sat around,
With a meek smile of pity blent with love,
More melting than e’er gleam’d from human face,
As when a sun-beam, through a summer shower,
Shines mildly on a little hill-side flock ;
And with that look of love he said, ‘Behold
My mother, and my brethren : for I say,
That whosoe’er shall do the will of God,
He is my brother, sister, mother, all.’ 10

BARTIMEUS RESTORED TO SIGHT.

BLIND, poor, and helpless, Bartimeus sate,
Listening the foot of the wayfaring man,
Still hoping that the next, and still the next,
Would put an alms into his trembling hand.
He thinks he hears the coming breeze faint rustle
Among the sycamores ; it is the tread
Of thousand steps ; it is the hum of tongues
Innumerable. But when the sightless man
Heard that the Nazarene was passing by,
He cried, and said, ‘Jesus, thou Son of David, 10
Have mercy upon me !’ and, when rebuked,
He cried the more, ‘Have mercy upon me.’
‘Thy faith hath made thee whole ;’ so Jesus spake—
And straight the blind beheld the face of God.

LITTLE CHILDREN BROUGHT TO JESUS.

‘SUFFER that little children come to me,
Forbid them not.’ Embolden’d by his words,

And quits his hold ; the voyagers appall'd
Shrink from the fancied Spirit of the Flood :
But when the voice of Jesus with the gale
Soft mingled, ' It is I, be not afraid,'
Fear fled, and joy lighten'd from eye to eye.
Up he ascends, and, from the rolling side,
Surveys the tumult of the sea and sky
With transient look severe : the tempest awed
Sinks to a sudden calm ; the clouds disperse ;
The moon-beam trembles on the face divine,
Reflected mildly in the unruffled deep.

7

THE DUMB CURED.

His eyes uplifted, and his hands close clasp'd,
The dumb man, with a supplicating look,
Turn'd as the Lord pass'd by : Jesus beheld,
And on him bent a pitying look, and spake :
His moving lips are by the suppliant seen,
And the last accents of the healing sentence
Ring in that ear which never heard before.
Prostrate the man restored falls to the earth,
And uses first the gift, the gift sublime,
Of speech, in giving thanks to him whose voice
Was never utter'd but in doing good.

10

THE DEATH OF JESUS.

' 'Tis finished : ' he spake the words, and bow'd
His head, and died. Beholding him far off,
They who had minister'd unto him hope
'Tis his last agony. The Temple's veil
Is rent ; revealing the most holy place,
Wherein the cherubims their wings extend,
O'ershadowing the mercy-seat of God.
Appall'd, the leaning soldier feels the spear

Shake in his grasp ; the planted standard falls 9
Upon the heaving ground : the sun is dimm'd,
And darkness shrouds the body of the Lord.

THE RESURRECTION.

THE setting orb of night her level ray
Shed o'er the land, and, on the dewy sward,
The lengthen'd shadows of the triple cross
Were laid far stretch'd, when in the east arose,
Last of the stars, day's harbinger. No sound
Was heard, save of the watching soldier's foot :
Within the rock-barred sepulchre, the gloom
Of deepest midnight brooded o'er the dead,
The holy one ; but, lo ! a radiance faint
Began to dawn around his sacred brow : 10
The linen vesture seem'd a snowy wreath
Drifted by storms into a mountain cave :
Bright and more bright the circling halo beam'd
Upon that face, clothed in a smile benign,
Though yet exanimate. Nor long the reign
Of death ; the eyes, that wept for human griefs,
Unclose, and look around with conscious joy ;
Yes, with returning life, the first emotion
That glow'd in Jesus' breast of love was joy
At man's redemption now complete ; at death 20
Disarm'd ; the grave transform'd into the couch
Of faith ; the resurrection, and the life.
Majestical he rose ; trembled the earth ;
The ponderous gate of stone was roll'd away ;
The keepers fell ; the angel, awe-struck, shrunk
Into invisibility, while forth
The Saviour of the World walk'd, and stood
Before the sepulchre, and view'd the clouds
Empurpled glorious by the rising sun.

JESUS APPEARS TO THE DISCIPLES.

THE evening of that day which saw the Lord
 Rise from the chambers of the dead was come.
 His faithful followers assembled sang
 A hymn low-breathed, a hymn of sorrow blent
 With hope—when in the midst sudden he stood.
 The awe-struck circle backward shrink ; he looks
 Around with a benignant smile of love,
 And says, ‘ Peace be unto you : ’ faith and joy
 Spread o’er each face, amazed ; as when the moon,
 Pavilion’d in dark clouds, mildly comes forth, 10
 Silvering a circlet in the fleecy rack.

PAUL ACCUSED BEFORE THE TRIBUNAL OF THE AREOPAGUS.

LISTEN, that voice ! upon the hill of Mars,
 Rolling in bolder thunders than e’er peal’d
 From lips that shook the Macedonian throne ;
 Behold his dauntless outstretch’d arm, his face
 Illumed of heaven : he knoweth not the fear
 Of man, of principalities, of powers.
 The Stoic’s moveless frown ; the vacant stare
 Of Epicurus’ herd ; the scowl and gnash malign
 Of Superstition, stopping both her ears ;
 The Arcopagite tribunal dread, 10
 From whence the doom of Socrates was utter’d ;
 This hostile throng dismays him not ; he seems
 As if no worldly object could inspire
 A terror in his soul ; as if the vision
 Which, when he journey’d to Damascus, shone
 From heaven, still swam before his eyes,
 Out-dazzling all things earthly ; as if the voice
 That spake from out the effulgence ever rang
 Within his ear, inspiring him with words,

Burning, majestic, lofty, as his theme— 20
The resurrection, and the life to come.

PAUL ACCUSED BEFORE THE ROMAN GOVERNOR OF JUDEA

THE judge ascended to the judgment-seat ;
Amid a gleam of spears the apostle stood ;
Dauntless, he forward came ; and look'd around,
And raised his voice, at first, in accents low,
Yet clear ; a whisper spread among the throng :
So when the thunder mutters, still the breeze
Is heard, at times, to sigh ; but when the peal,
Tremendous, louder rolls, a silence dead
Succeeds each pause, moveless the aspen leaf.
Thus fix'd, and motionless, the listening band 10
Of soldiers forward lean'd, as from the man,
Inspired of God, truth's awful thunders roll'd.
No more he feels, upon his high-raised arm,
The ponderous chain, than does the playful child
The bracclet, form'd of many a flowery link.
Heedless of self, forgetful that his life
Is now to be defended by his words,
He only thinks of doing good to them
Who seek his life ; and, while he reasons high
Of justice, temperance, and the life to come, 20
The judge shrinks trembling at the prisoner's voice.

THE RURAL CALENDAR.

JANUARY.

LONG ere the snow-veil'd dawn, the bird of morn
His wings quick claps, and sounds his cheering call :
The cottage hinds the glimmering lantern trim,

And to the barn wade, sinking, in the drift; 4
The alternate flails bounce from the loosen'd sheaf.
Pleasant these sounds! they sleep to slumber change;
Pleasant to him whom no laborious task
Whispers, Arise!—whom neither love of gain,
Nor love of power, nor hopes, nor fears, disturb.

Late daylight comes at last, and the strain'd eye 10
Shrinks from the dazzling brightness of the scene,
One wide expanse of whiteness uniform.
As yet no wandering footstep has defaced
The spotless plain, save where some wounded hare,
Wrench'd from the springe, has left a blood-stain'd track.
How smooth are all the fields! sunk every fence;
The furrow, here and there, heap'd to a ridge,
O'er which the sidelong plough-shaft scarcely peers.

Cold blows the north-wind o'er the dreary waste.
Oh ye that shiver by your blazing fires, 20
Think of the inmates of you hut, half-sunk
Beneath the drift: from it no smoke ascends;
The broken straw-fill'd pane excludes the light,
But ill excludes the blast: the redbreast there
For shelter seeks, but short, ah! very short
His stay; no crumbs, strewn careless on the floor,
Attract his sidelong glance; to warmer roofs
He flies; a welcome, soon a fearless guest,
He cheers the winter day with summer songs.

Short is the reign of day, tedious the night. 30
The city's distant lights arrest my view,
And magic fancy whirls me to the scene.
There vice and folly run their giddy rounds;
There eager crowds are hurrying to the sight
Of feign'd distress, yet have not time to hear
The shivering orphan's prayer. The flaring lamps
Of gilded chariots, like the meteor eyes

Of mighty giants, famed in legends old, 38
 Illume the snowy street ; the silent wheels
 On heedless passenger steal unperceived,
 Bearing the splendid fair to flutter round
 Amid the flowery labyrinths of the dance.
 But, hark ! the merry catch : good social souls
 Sing on, and drown dull care in bumpers deep ;
 The bell, snow-muffled, warns not of the hour ;
 For scarce the sentenced felon's watchful ear
 Can catch the soften'd knell, by which he sums
 The hours he has to live. Poor hopeless wretch !
 His thoughts are horror, and his dreams despair ;
 And ever as he, on his strawy couch, 50
 Turns heavily, his chains and fetters, grating,
 Awake the inmates of some neighbouring cell,
 Who bless their lot that debt is all their crime.

FEBRUARY.

THE treacherous fowler, in the drifted wreath,
 The snare conceals, and strews the husky lure,
 Tempting the famish'd fowls of heaven to light :
 They light ; the captive strives in vain to fly,
 Scattering around, with fluttering wing, the snow.
 Amid the untrod snows, oft let me roam
 Far up the lonely glen, and mark its change ;
 The frozen rill's hoarse murmur scarce is heard ;
 The rocky cleft, the fairy bourn smooth'd up,
 Repeat no more my solitary voice. 10

Now to the icy plain the city swarms.
 In giddy circles, whirling variously,
 The skater fleetly thrills the mazy throng,
 While smaller wights the sliding pastime ply.
 Unhappy he, of poverty the child !
 Who, barefoot, standing, eyes his merry mates,

And, shivering, weeps, not for the biting cold, 17
But that he cannot join the slippery sport.

Trust not incautiously the smooth expanse ;
For oft a treacherous thaw, ere yet perceived,
Saps by degrees the solid-seeming mass :
At last the long piled mountain-snows dissolve,
Bursting the roaring river's brittle bonds ;
The shatter'd fragments down the cataract shoot,
And, sinking in the boiling deep below,
At distance re-appear, then sweep along
Marking their height upon the half-sunk trees.

No more the ploughman hurls the sounding quoit ;
The loosen'd glebe demands the rusted share,
And slow the toiling team plods o'er the field. 30
But oft, ere half the winding task be done,
Returning frost again usurps the year,
Fixing the ploughshare in the unfinish'd fur ;
And still, at times, the flaky shower descends,
Whitening the plain, save where the wheaten blade,
Peering, uplifts its green and hardy head,
As if just springing from a soil of snow.

While yet the night is long, and drear, and chill,
Soon as the slanting sun has sunk from view,
The sounding anvil cheerily invites 40
The weary hind to leave his twinkling fire,
And bask himself before the furnace glare ;
Where, bless'd with unbought mirth, the rustic ring,
Their faces tinted by the yellow blaze,
Beguile the hours, nor envy rooms of state.

MARCH.

THE ravaged fields, waste, colourless, and bleak,
Retreating Winter leaves, with angry frown,

And lingering on the distant snow-streak'd hills, 3
Displays the motley remnants of his reign.

With shoulder'd spade, the labourer to the field
Hies, joyful that the soften'd globe gives leave
To toil ; no more his children cry for bread,
Or, shivering, crowd around the scanty fire ;
No more he's doom'd, reluctant, to receive
The pittance which the rich man proudly gives, 10
Who, when he gives, thinks Heaven itself obliged.
Vain man ! think not there's merit in the boon,
If, quitting not one comfort, not one joy,
The sparkling wine still circles round thy board,
Thy hearth still blazes, and the sounding strings,
Blent with the voice symphonious, charm thine ear.

The redbreast now, at morn, resumes his song,
And larks, high-soaring, wing their spiral flight,
While the light-hearted plough-boy singing, blithe,
'The broom, the bonny broom of Cowdenknowes,' 20
Fills with delight the wandering townsman's ear ;
May be, though caroll'd rude in artless guise,
Sad Flodden Field, of Scotia's lays most sweet,
Most mournful, dims, with starting tear, his eye.
Nor silent are the upland leas ; cheerily
The partridge now her tuneless call repeats,
Or, bursting unexpected from the brake,
Startles the milkmaid singing o'er the ridge.
Nor silent are the chilly leafless woods ;
The thrush's note is heard amid the grove, 30
Soon as the primrose, from the wither'd leaves,
Smiling, looks out : rash floweret ! oft betray'd.
By summer-seeming days, to venture forth
Thy tender form, the killing northern blast
Will wrap thee lifeless in a hoar-frost shroud.

APRIL.

DESCEND, sweet April, from yon watery bow,
And, liberal, strew the ground with budding flowers,
With leafless crocus, leaf-veil'd violet,
Auricula, with powder'd cup, primrose
That loves to lurk below the hawthorn shade.
At thy approach health re-illumes the eye :
Even pale Consumption, from thy balmy breath,
Inhales delusive hope ; and, dreaming still
Of length of days, basks in some sunny plat,
And decks her half-foreboding breast with flowers, 10
With flowers, which else would have survived the hand
By which they're pull'd. But they will bloom again :
The daisy, spreading on the greensward grave,
Fades, dies, and seems to perish, yet revives.
Shall man for ever sleep ? Cruel the tongue !
That, with sophistic art, snatches from pain,
Disease, and grief, and want, that antidote,
Which makes the wretched smile, the hopeless hope.

Light now the western gale sweeps o'er the plain,
Gently it waves the rivulet's cascade ; 20
Gently it parts the lock on beauty's brow,
And lifts the tresses from the snowy neck,
And bends the flowers, and makes the lily stoop,
As if to kiss its image in the wave ;
Or curls, with softest breath, the glassy pool,
Aiding the treachery of the mimic fly ;
While, warily, behind the half-leaved bush,
The angler screen'd, with keenest eye intent,
Awaits the sudden rising of the trout :
Down dips the feathery lure ; the quivering rod 30
Bends low ; in vain the cheated captive strives
To break the yielding line ; exhausted soon,

Ashore he's drawn, and, on the mossy bank
Weltering, he dyes the primrose with his blood.

23

MAY.

ON blithe May morning, when the lark's first note
Ascends, on viewless wing, veil'd in the mist,
The village maids then hie them to the woods
To kiss the fresh dew from the daisy's brim ;
Wandering in misty glades they lose their way,
And, ere aware, meet in their lovers' arms,
Like joining dew-drops on the blushing rose.

Sweet month ! thy locks with bursting buds bedeck'd,
With opening hyacinths, and hawthorn blooms,
Fair still thou art, though showers bedim thine eye ; 10
The cloud soon quits thy brow ; and, mild, the sun
Looks out with watery beam—looks out, and smiles.

Now from the wild-flower bank the little bird
Picks the soft moss, and to the thicket flies ;
And oft returns, and oft the work renews,
Till all the curious fabric hangs complete :
Alas ! but ill conceal'd from schoolboy's eye,
Who, heedless of the warbler's saddest plaint,
Tears from the bush the toil of many an hour ;
Then, thoughtless wretch ! pursues the devious bee, 20
Buzzing from flower to flower : she wings her flight,
Far from his following eye, to wall'd parterres,
Where, undisturb'd, she revels 'mid the beds
Of full-blown lilies, doom'd to die uncull'd,
Save when the stooping fair (more beauteous flower !)
The bosom's rival brightness half betrays,
While choosing 'mong the gently bending stalks,
The snowy hand a sister blossom seems.

More sweet to me the lily's meek'd grace
Than gaudy hues, brilliant as summer clouds

24

Around the sinking sun : to me more sweet 31
 Than garish day, the twilight's soften'd grace,
 When deepening shades obscure the dusky woods ;
 Then comes the silence of the dewy hour,
 With songs of noontide birds, thrilling in fancy's ear,
 While from yon elm, with water-kissing boughs
 Along the moveless winding of the brook,
 The smooth expanse is calmness, stillness all,
 Unless the springing trout, with quick replunge,
 Arousing meditation's downward look, 40
 Ruffle, with many a gently circling wave
 On wave, the glassy surface undulating far.

JUNE.

SHORT is the reign of night, and almost blends
 The evening twilight with the morning dawn.
 Mild hour of dawn ! thy wide-spread solitude
 And placid stillness soothe even misery's sigh :
 Deep the distress that cannot feel thy charm !
 As yet the thrush roosts on the bloomy spray,
 With head beneath his dew-besprinkled wing,
 When, roused by my lone tread, he lightly shakes
 His ruffling plumes, and chants the untaught note,
 Soon follow'd by the woodland choir, warbling 10
 Melodiously the oft-repeated song,
 Till noontide pour the torpor-shedding ray.
 Then is the hour to seek the sylvan bank
 Of lonely stream, remote from human haunt ;
 To mark the wild bee voyaging, deep-toned,
 Low weighing down each floweret's tender stalk ;
 To list the grasshopper's hoarse creaking chirp ;
 And then to let excursive fancy fly
 To scenes where roaring cannon drown the straining voice,
 And fierce gesticulation takes the place 20

Of useless words. May be some Alpine brook, 21
That served to part two neighbouring shepherds' flocks,
Is now the limit of two hostile camps.

Weak limit ! to be fill'd, ere evening star,
With heaps of slain. Far down thy rocky course,
The midnight wolf, lapping the blood-stain'd flood,
Gluts his keen thirst, and oft and oft returns,
Unsated, to the purple, tepid stream.

But let me fly such scenes, which, even when feign'd,
Distress. To Scotia's peaceful glens I turn, 30
And rest my eyes upon her waving fields,
Where now the scythe lays low the mingled flowers.
Ah, spare, thou pitying swain ! a ridge-breadth round
The partridge nest : so shall no new-come lord,
To ope a vista to some distant spire,
Thy cottage raze ; but, when the toilsome day
Is done, still shall the turf-laid seat invite
Thy weary limbs ; there peace and health shall bless
Thy frugal fare, served by the unhired hand,
That seeks no wages save a parent's smile. 40
Thus glides the eve, while round the strawy roof
Is heard the bat's wing in the deep-hush'd air,
And from the little field the corn-craik's harsh,
Yet not unpleasing note, the stillness breaks,
All the night long, till day-spring wake the lark.

JULY.

SLOW move the sultry hours. Oh, for the shield
Of darkening boughs, or hollow rock grotesque !

The pool transparent to its pebbly bed,
With here and there a slowly gliding trout,
Invites the throbbing, half-reluctant breast
To plunge : the dash re-echoes from the rocks ;
Smoothly, in sinuous course, the swimmer winds,

Now, with extended arms, rowing his way, 8
 And now, with sunward face, he floating lies ;
 Till, blinded by the dazzling beam, he turns,
 Then to the bottom dives, emerging soon
 With stone, as trophy, in his waving hand :
 Blithe days of jocund youth, now almost flown !
 Meantime, far up the windings of the stream,
 Where o'er the narrow'd course the hazels meet,
 The sportive shriek, shrill, mingled with the laugh,
 The bushes hung with beauty's white attire,
 Tempt, yet forbid, the intrusive eye's approach.

Unhappy he, who, in this season, pent
 Within the darksome gloom of city lane, 20
 Pines for the flowery paths and woody shades,
 From which the love of lucre or of power
 Enticed his youthful steps. In vain he turns
 The rich descriptive page of Thomson's Muse,
 And strives to fancy that the lovely scenes
 Are present : so the hand of childhood tries
 To grasp the pictured bunch of fruit or flowers,
 But, disappointed, feels the canvas smooth :
 So the caged lark, upon a withering turf,
 Flutters from side to side, with quivering wings, 30
 As if in act of mounting to the skies.

At noontide hour, from school, the little throng
 Rush gaily, sporting o'er the enamell'd mead.
 Some strive to catch the bloom-perch'd butterfly,
 And if they miss his mealy wings, the flower
 From which he flies the disappointment soothes.
 Others, so pale in look, in tatter'd garb,
 Motley with half-spun threads and cotton flakes,
 Trudge, drooping, to the many-storied pile,
 Where thousand spindles whirling stun the ear, 40
 Confused : there, prison'd close, they wretched moil.

Sweet age, perverted from its proper end ! 42
 When childhood toils, the field should be the scene—
 To tend the sheep, or drive the herd a-field,
 Or, from the corn-fields, scare the pilfering rooks,
 Or to the mowers bear the milky pail.
 But, Commerce, Commerce, Manufactures, still
 Weary the ear ; health, morals, all must yield
 To pamper the monopolising few :
 'Twill make a wealthy, but a wretched state. 50
 Bless'd be the generous band that would restore
 To honour due the long-neglected plough !
 From it expect peace, plenty, virtue, health :
 Compare with it, Britannia, all thine isles
 Beyond the Atlantic wave ! thy trade ! thy ships
 Deep-fraught with blood !

But let me quit such themes, and, peaceful, roam
 The winding glen, where now the wild rose pale,
 And garish broom, strew with their fading flowers
 The narrow greenwood path. To me more sweet 60
 The greenwood path, half-hid 'neath brake and brier.
 Than pebbled walks so trim ; more dear to me
 The daisied plat before the cottage door
 Than waveless sea of widely spreading lawn,
 'Mid which some insulated mansion towers,
 Spurning the humble dwellings from its proud domain.

AUGUST.

FAREWELL, sweet Summer, and thy fading flowers !
 Farewell, sweet Summer, and thy woodland songs !
 No woodland note is heard, save where the hawk,
 High from her cyrie, skims in circling flight,
 With all her clamorous young, first venturing forth
 On untried wing : at distance far, the sound
 Alarms the barn-door flock ; the fearful dam

Calls in her brood beneath her ruffling plumes ; 8
 With crowding feet they stand, and frequent peep
 Through the half-open'd wing. The partridge quakes
 Among the rustling corn. Ye gentle tribes,
 Think not your deadliest foe is now at hand.
 To man, bird, beast, *man* is the deadliest foe ;
 'Tis he who wages universal war.

Soon as his murderous law gives leave to wound
 The heathfowl, dweller on the mountain wild,
 The sportsman, anxious, watching for the dawn,
 Lies turning, while his dog, in happy dreams,
 With feeble bark anticipates the day.

Some, ere the dawn steals o'er the deep-blue lake, 20
 The hill ascend : vain is their eager haste ;
 The dog's quick breath is heard panting around,
 But neither dog nor springing game is seen
 Amid the floating mist ; short interval
 Of respite to the trembling dewy wing.

Ah ! many a bleeding wing, ere mid-day hour,
 Shall vainly flap the purple bending heath.
 Fatigued, at noon, the spoiler seeks the shade
 Of some lone oak, fast by the rocky stream,
 The hunter's rest, in days of other years, 30
 When sad the voice of Cona, in the gale,
 Lamentingly the song of Selma sung.

How changeful, Caledonia, is thy clime !
 Where is the sunbeam that but now so bright
 Play'd on the dimpling brook ? Dark o'er the heath
 A deepening gloom is hung ; from clouds high piled
 On clouds the sudden flash glances ; the thunder
 Rolls far, reverberated 'mong the cliffs ;
 Nor pause ; but ere the echo of one peal
 Has ceased, another, louder still, the ear appals. 40
 The sporting lamb hastes to its mother's side ;

The shepherd stoops into the mountain-cave, 42
 At every momentary flash illumed
 Back to its innermost recess, where gleams
 The vaulted spar ; the eagle, sudden smote,
 Falls to the ground lifeless ; beneath the wave
 The sea-fowl plunges ; fast the rain descends ;
 The whiten'd streams, from every mountain side,
 Rush to the valley, tinging far the lake.

SEPTEMBER.

GRADUAL the woods their varied tints assume ;
 The hawthorn reddens, and the rowan-tree
 Displays its ruby clusters, seeming sweet,
 Yet harsh, disfiguring the fairest face.

At sultry hour of noon, the reaper band
 Rest from their toil, and in the lusty stook
 Their sickles hang. Around their simple fare,
 Upon the stubble spread, blithesome they form
 A circling group, while humbly waits behind
 The wistful dog, and with expressive look, 10
 And pawing foot, implores his little share.

The short repast, season'd with simple mirth,
 And not without the song, gives place to sleep.
 With sheaf beneath his head, the rustic youth
 Enjoys sweet slumbers, while the maid he loves
 Steals to his side, and screens him from the sun.

But not by day alone the reapers toil :
 Oft in the moon's pale ray the sickle gleams,
 And heaps the dewy sheaf ; thy changeful sky,
 Poor Scotland ! warns to seize the hour serene. 20

The gleaners, wandering with the morning ray,
 Spread o'er the new-reap'd field. Tottering old age
 And lisping infancy are there, and she
 Who better days has seen.

No shelter now 24

The covey finds ; but, hark ! the murderous tube.
 Exultingly the deep-mouth'd spaniel bears
 The fluttering victim to his master's foot :
 Perhaps another, wounded, flying far
 Eludes the eager following eye, and drops
 Among the lonely furze to pine and die. 30

OCTOBER.

With hound and horn, o'er moor and hill and dale,
 The chase sweeps on ; no obstacle they heed,
 Nor hedge, nor ditch, nor wood, nor river wide.
 The clamorous pack rush rapid down the vale,
 Whilst o'er yon brushwood tops, at times, are seen
 The moving branches of the victim stag :
 Soon far beyond he stretches o'er the plain.
 Oh, may he safe elude the savage rout,
 And may the woods be left to peace again !

Hushed are the faded woods ; no bird is heard, 10
 Save where the redbreast mourns the falling leaf.
 At close of shorten'd day, the reaper, tired,
 With sickle on his shoulder, homeward hies :
 Night comes with threatening storm, first whispering low,
 Sighing amid the boughs ; then, by degrees,
 With violence redoubled at each pause,
 Furious it rages, scaring startled sleep.
 The river roars. Long-wish'd, at last the dawn,
 Doubtful, peeps forth ; the winds are hush'd, and sleep
 Lights on the eyes unsullied with a tear ; 20
 Nor flies, but at the ploughboy's whistle blithe,
 Or hunter's horn, or sound of hedger's bill.
 Placid the sun shoots through the half-stripp'd grove ;
 The grove's sere leaves float down the dusky flood.
 The happy schoolboy, whom the swollen streams,

Perilous to wight so small, give holiday, 23
 Forth roaming, now wild-berries pulls, now paints,
 Artless, his rosy check with purple hue ;
 Now wonders that the nest, hung in the leafless thorn,
 So full in view, escaped erewhile his search ;
 On tiptoe raised, ah, disappointment dire !
 His eager hand finds nought but wither'd leaves.

Night comes again ; the cloudless canopy
 Is one bright arch, myriads, myriads of stars.
 To him who wanders 'mong the silent woods,
 The twinkling orbs beam through the leafless boughs,
 Which erst excluded the meridian ray.

NOVEMBER.

LANGUID the morning beam slants o'er the lea ;
 The hoary grass, crisp, crackles 'neath the tread.

On the haw-cluster'd thorns, a motley flock
 Of birds, of various plume, and various note,
 Discordant chirp ; the linnet, and the thrush,
 With speckled breast, the blackbird yellow-beak'd,
 The goldfinch, fieldfare, with the sparrow, pert
 And clamorous above his shivering mates,
 While, on the house-top, faint the redbreast plains.

Where do ye lurk, ye houseless commoners, 14
 When bleak November's sun is overcast ;
 When sweeps the blast fierce through the deepest groves,
 Driving the fallen leaves in whirling wreaths ;
 When scarce the raven keeps her bending perch,
 When dashing cataracts are backward blown ?

A deluge pours ; loud comes the river down :
 The margin trees now insulated seem,
 As if they in the midway current grew.
 Oft let me stand upon the giddy brink,
 And chase, with following gaze, the whirling foam. 20

Or woodland wreck. Ah me, that broken branch, 21
 Sweeping along, may tempt some heedless boy,
 Sent by his needy parents to the woods
 For brushwood gleanings for their evening fire,
 To stretch too far his little arm ; he falls,
 He sinks ! Long is he look'd for, oft he's call'd ;
 His homeward whistle oft is fancied near :
 His playmates find him on the oozy bank,
 And in his stiffen'd grasp the fatal branch.

Short is the day ; dreary the boisterous night : 30
 At intervals the moon gleams through the clouds,
 And, now and then, a star is dimly seen.

When daylight breaks, the woodman leaves his hut,
 And oft the axe's echoing stroke is heard ;
 At last the yielding oak's loud crash resounds,
 Crushing the humble hawthorn in its fall.
 The husbandman slow plods from ridge to ridge,
 Dishearten'd, and rebuilds his prostrate sheaves.

DECEMBER.

WHERE late the wild-flower bloom'd, the brown leaf lies ;
 Not even the snowdrop cheers the dreary plain :
 The famish'd birds forsake each leafless spray,
 And flock around the barn-yard's winnowing store.

Season of social mirth ! of fireside joys !
 I love thy shorten'd day, when, at its close,
 The blazing tapers, on the jovial board,
 Dispense o'er every care-forgetting face
 Their cheering light, and round the bottle glides :
 Now far be banish'd from our social ring 10
 The party wrangle fierce, the argument
 Deep, learned, metaphysical, and dull,
 Oft dropp'd, as oft again renew'd, endless :
 Rather I'd hear stories twice ten times told,

Or vapid joke, filch'd from Joe Miller's page, 15
Or tale of ghost, hobgoblin dire, or witch ;
Nor would I, with a proud fastidious frown,
Proscribe the laugh-provoking pun : absurd
Though 't be, far-fetch'd, and hard to be discern'd,
It serves the purpose, if it shake our sides. 20
Now let the circling wine inspire the song,
The catch, the glee ; or list the melting lays
Of Scotia's pastoral vales,—they ever please.

Loud blows the blast ; while, shelter'd from its rage,
The social circle feel their joys enhanced.
Ah ! little think they of the storm-toss'd ship,
Amid the uproar of the winds and waves,
The waves unseen save by the lightning's glare,
Or cannon's flash, sad signal of distress.
The trembling crew each moment think they feel 25
The shock of sunken rock ; at last they strike :
Borne on the blast their dying voices reach,
Faintly, the sea-girt hamlet ; help is vain :
The morning light discloses to the view
The mast alternate seen and hid, as sinks
Or heaves the surge. The early village maid
Turns pale, like clouds when o'er the moon they glide ;
She thinks of her true love, far, far at sea ;
Mournful, the live-long day she turns her wheel,
And ever and anon her head she bends, 30
While with the flax she dries the trickling tear.

TO A REDBREAST,

THAT FLEW IN AT MY WINDOW.

FROM snowy plains and icy sprays,
From moonless nights and sunless days,
Welcome, poor bird ! I'll cherish thee ;
I love thee, for thou trustest me.
Thrice welcome, helpless, panting guest !
Fondly I'll warm thee in my breast :
How quick thy little heart is beating !
As if its brother flutterer greeting.
Thou need'st not dread a captive's doom ;
No ! freely flutter round my room ;
Perch on my lute's remaining string,
And sweetly of sweet summer sing.
That note, that summer note, I know ;
It wakes, at once, and soothes my woe,—
I see those woods, I see that stream,
I see,—ah, still prolong the dream !
Still with thy song those scenes renew,
Though through my tears they reach my view.

No more now, at my lonely meal,
While thou art by, alone I'll feel ;
For soon, devoid of all distrust,
Thou'lt, nibbling, share my humble crust ;
Or on my finger, pert and spruce,
Thou'lt learn to sip the sparkling juice ;
And when (our short collation o'er)
Some favourite volume I explore,
Be't work of poet or of sage,
Safe thou shalt hop across the page,
Uncheck'd, shalt flit o'er Virgil's groves,
Or flutter 'mid Tibullus' loves.

Thus, heedless of the raving blast, 31
 Thou'lt dwell with me till winter's past ;
 And when the primrose tells 'tis spring,
 And when the thrush begins to sing,
 Soon as I hear the woodland song,
 I'll set thee free to join the throng.

EPITAPH ON A BLACKBIRD,

KILLED BY A HAWK.

- 1 WINTER was o'er, and spring-flowers deck'd the glade,
 The Blackbird's note among the wild woods rung :
 Ah, short-lived note ! the songster now is laid
 Beneath the bush on which so sweet he sung.
- 2 Thy jetty plumes, by ruthless falcon rent,
 Are now all soil'd among the mouldering clay ;
 A primrosed turf is all thy monument,
 And, for thy dirge, the Redbreast lends his lay.
-

TO ENGLAND, ON THE SLAVE TRADE.

OF all thy foreign crimes, from pole to pole,
 None moves such indignation in my soul,
 Such hate, such deep abhorrence, as thy trade
 In human beings !
 Thy ignorance thou dar'st to plead no more ;
 The proofs have thunder'd from the Afric shore.
 Behold, behold, yon rows ranged over rows,
 Of dead with dying link'd in death's last throes.
 Behold a single victim of despair,
 Dragg'd upon deck to gasp the ocean air ; 10

Devoid of fear, he hears the tempest rise ; 11
 The ship descending 'tween the waves, he eyes
 With eager hope ; he thinks his woes shall end :
 Sunk in despair he sees her still ascend.

What barbarous race are authors of his woes ?
 With freights of fetters, who the vessel stows ?
 Who manufactures thumb-screws ? who the scourge ?
 Whose navies shield the pirates o'er the surge ?
 Who, from the mother's arms, the clinging child
 Tears ? It is England—merciful and mild ! 20
 Most impious race, who brave the watery realm
 In blood-fraught barks, with Murder at the helm !
 Who trade in tortures, profit draw from pain,
 And even whose mercy is but love of gain !
 Whose human cargoes carefully are pack'd
 By rule and square, according to the Act !—
 And is that gore-drench'd flag by you unfurl'd,
 Champions of right, knights-errant of the world ?
 ' Yes, yes,' your Commons said, ' Let such things be ;
 If others rob and murder, why not we ? ' 30
 In the smooth'd speech, and in the upraised hand,
 I hear the lash, I hear the fierce command ;
 Each guilty ' nay ' ten thousand crimes decreed,
 And English mercy said, Let millions bleed ! ,

THE THANKSGIVING OFF CAPE TRAFALGAR.

UPON the high yet gently rolling wave,
 The floating tomb that heaves above the brave,
 Soft sighs the gale, that late tremendous roar'd,
 Whelming the wretched remnants of the sword.

And now the cannon's peaceful summons calls 5
The victor bands to mount their wooden walls,
And from the ramparts, where their comrades fell,
The mingled strain of joy and grief to swell !
Fast they ascend, from stem to stern they spread,
And crowd the engines whence the lightnings sped : 10
The white-robed priest his upraised hands extends ;
Hush'd is each voice, attention leaning bends ;
Then from each prow the grand hosannas rise,
Float o'er the deep, and hover to the skies.
Heaven fills each heart ; yet home will oft intrude,
And tears of love celestial joys exclude.
The wounded man, who hears the soaring strain,
Lifts his pale visage, and forgets his pain ;
While parting spirits, mingling with the lay,
On Halleluiahs wing their heavenward way. 20

END OF GRAHAME'S POEMS.

